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THE
WORKS

OF

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

VOL. CXLVI.

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN, VOL. V.

ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1829.

THE

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WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

1840

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WICKHAM

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1840

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN;

OR,

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF „WAVERLEY,” etc.

*What! will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
Sink in the ground?*

SHAKSPEARE.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

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ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

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ALIVE OF GILBERT;

OR,

THE MANNER OF THE MIST.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WATKINS'S OF

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IN FIVE VOLUMES.

Vol. V.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

*Ay, this is he who wears the wreath of bays  
Wove by Apollo and the Sisters Nine,  
Which Jove's dread lightning scathes not. He  
hath doft*

*The cumbrous helm of steel, and flung aside  
The yet more galling diadem of gold;  
While, with a leafy circlet round his brows,  
He reigns the King of Lovers and of Poets.*

---

A CAUTIOUS approuch to the chimney, that is,  
the favourite walk of the King, who is described  
by Shakspeare as bearing

— — the style of King of Naples,  
Of both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem,  
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman,

gave Arthur the perfect survey of his Majesty in  
person. He saw an old man, with locks and  
beard, which, in amplitude and whiteness,



nearly rivalled those of the envoy from Schwitz, but with a fresh and ruddy colour in his cheek, and an eye of great vivacity. His dress was showy to a degree almost inconsistent with his years; and his step, not only firm but full of alertness and vivacity, while occupied in traversing the short and sheltered walk, which he had chosen, rather for comfort than for privacy, showed juvenile vigour, still animating an aged frame. The old King carried his tablets, and a pencil, in his hand, seeming totally abstracted in his own thoughts, and indifferent to being observed by several persons from the public street beneath his elevated promenade.

Of these, some, from their dress and manner, seemed themselves Troubadours; for they held in their hands rebecks, rotes, small portable harps, and other indications of their profession. Such appeared to be stationary, as if engaged in observing, and recording their remarks on the meditations of their Prince. Other passengers, bent on their own more serious affairs, looked up to the King as to some one whom they were accustomed to see daily; but never passed without doffing their bonnets, and expressing, by a suitable obeisance, a respect and affection towards his person, which appeared to make up in cordiality of feeling what it wanted in deep and solemn deference.



René, in the meanwhile, was apparently unconscious both of the gaze of such as stood still, or the greeting of those who passed on, his mind seeming altogether engrossed with the apparent labour of some arduous task in poetry or music. He walked fast or slow as best suited the progress of composition. At times he stopped to mark hastily down on his tablets something which seemed to occur to him as deserving of preservation; at other times he dashed out what he had written, and flung down the pencil as if in a sort of despair. On these occasions, the Sibylline leaf was carefully picked up by a beautiful page, his only attendant, who reverently observed the first suitable opportunity of restoring it again to his royal hand. The same youth bore a viol, on which, at a signal from his master, he occasionally struck a few musical notes, to which the old King listened, now with a soothed and satisfied air, now with a discontented and anxious brow. At times, his enthusiasm rose so high, that he even hopped and skipped, with an activity which his years did not promise; at other times his motions were extremely slow, and occasionally he stood still, like one wrapped in the deepest and most anxious meditation. When he chanced to look on the group which seemed to watch his motions, and who ventured even to salute him with



a murmur of applause, it was only to distinguish them with a friendly and good humoured nod; a salutation with which, likewise, he failed not to reply to the greeting of the occasional passengers, when his earnest attention to his task, whatever it might be, permitted him to observe them.

At length the Royal eye lighted upon Arthur, whose attitude of silent observation, and the distinction of his figure, pointed him out as a stranger. René beckoned to his page, who, receiving his master's commands in a whisper, descended from the royal chimney, to the broader platform beneath, which was open to general resort. The youth, addressing Arthur with much courtesy, informed him the King desired to speak with him. The young Englishman had no alternative but that of approaching, though pondering much in his own mind how he ought to comport himself towards such a singular specimen of royalty.

When he drew near, King René addressed him in a tone of courtesy not unmingled with dignity, and Arthur's awe in his immediate presence was greater than he himself could have anticipated from his previous conception of the royal character.

"You are, from your appearance, fair sir," said King René, "a stranger in this country."



By what name must we call you, and to what business are we to ascribe the happiness of seeing you at our court?"

Arthur remained a moment silent, and the good old man, imputing it to awe and timidity, proceeded in an encouraging tone.

"Modesty in youth is ever commendable; you are doubtless an acolyte in the noble and joyous science of Minstrelsy and Music, drawn hither by the willing welcome which we afford to the professors of those arts, in which — praise be to Our Lady and the saints! — we have ourselves been deemed a proficient."

"I do not aspire to the honours of a Troubadour," answered Arthur.

"I believe you," answered the King, "for your speech smacks of the northern, or Norman-French, such as is spoken in England and other unrefined nations. But you are a minstrel, perhaps, from these ultramontane parts. Be assured we despise not their efforts; for we have listened, not without pleasure and instruction, to many of their bold and wild romaunts, which, though rude in device and language, and, therefore, far inferior to the regulated poetry of our Troubadours, have yet something in their powerful and rough measure, which occasionally rouses the heart like the sound of a trumpet."



“I have felt the truth of your Grace’s observation, when I have heard the songs of my country,” said Arthur; “but I have neither skill nor audacity to imitate what I admire — My latest residence has been in Italy.”

“You are perhaps then a proficient in painting,” said René; “an art which applies itself to the eye, as poetry and music do to the ear, and is scarce less in esteem with us. If you are skilful in the art, you have come to a monarch who loves it, and the fair country in which it is practised.”

“In simple truth, Sire, I am an Englishman, and my hand has been too much welk’d and hardened by practice of the bow, the lance, and the sword, to touch the harp, or even the pencil.”

“An Englishman!” said René, obviously relaxing in the warmth of his welcome; “and what brings you here? England and I have long had little friendship together.”

“It is even on that account that I am here,” said Arthur, “I come to pay my homage to your Grace’s daughter, the Princess Margaret of Anjou, whom I and many true Englishmen regard still as our Queen, though traitors have usurped her title.”

“Alas, good youth,” said René, “I must grieve for you, while I respect your loyalty and



faith. Had my daughter Margaret been of my mind, she had long since abandoned pretensions, which have drowned in seas of blood the noblest and bravest of her adherents."

The King seemed about to say more, but checked himself.

"Go to my palace," he said; "enquire for the Seneschal Hugh de Saint Cyr, he will give thee the means of seeing Margaret — that is, if it be her will to see thee. If not, good English youth, return to my palace, and thou shalt have hospitable entertainment; for a King who loves minstrelsy, music, and painting, is ever most sensible to the claims of honour, virtue, and loyalty; and I read in thy looks thou art possessed of these qualities, and willingly believe thou mayst, in more quiet times, aspire to share the honours of the joyous science. But if thou hast a heart to be touched by the sense of beauty and fair proportion, it will leap within thee at the first sight of my palace, the stately grace of which may be compared to the faultless form of some high-bred dame, or the artful, yet seemingly simple modulations of such a tune as we have been now composing."

The king seemed disposed to take his instrument, and indulge the youth with a rehearsal of the strain he had just arranged; but Arthur at that moment experienced the painful internal



feeling of that peculiar species of shame, which well-constructed minds feel when they see others express a great assumption of importance, with a confidence that they are exciting admiration, when in fact they are only exposing themselves to ridicule. Arthur, in short, took leave, "in very shame," of the King of Naples, both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem, in a manner somewhat more abrupt than ceremony demanded. The king looked after him, with some wonder at this want of breeding, which however, he imputed to his visitor's insular education, and then again began to twangle his viol.

"The old fool!" said Arthur; "his daughter is dethroned, his dominions crumbling to pieces, his family on the eve of becoming extinct, his grandson driven from one lurking place to another, and expelled from his mother's inheritance, — and he can find amusement in these fopperies! I thought him, with his long white beard, like Nicolas Bonstetten; but the old Swiss is a Solomon compared with him."

As these and other reflections, highly disparaging to King René, passed through Arthur's mind, he reached the place of rendezvous, and found Thiebault beneath the steaming fountain, forced from one of those hot springs which had been the delight of the Romans from an early



period. Thiebault, having assured his master that his retinue, horse and man, were so disposed as to be ready on an instant's call, readily undertook to guide him to King René's palace, which, from its singularity, and indeed its beauty of architecture, deserved the eulogium which the old monarch had bestowed upon it. The front consisted of three towers of Roman architecture, two of them being placed on the palace, and the third, which served the purpose of a mausoleum, forming a part of the group, though somewhat detached from the other buildings. This last was a structure of beautiful proportions. The lower part of the edifice was square, serving as a sort of pedestal to the upper part, which was circular, and surrounded by columns of massive granite. The other two towers at the angles of the palace were round, and also ornamented with pillars, and with a double row of windows. In front of, and connected with, these Roman remains, to which a date has been assigned as early as the fifth or sixth century, arose the ancient palace of the Counts of Provence, built a century or two later, but where a rich Gothic or Moorish front contrasted, and yet harmonized, with the more regular and massive architecture of the lords of the world. It is not more than thirty or forty years since this very curious remnant of antique art was destroyed, to



make room for new public buildings, which have never yet been erected.

Arthur really experienced some sensation of the kind which the old king had prophesied, and stood looking with wonder at the ever-open gate of the palace, into which men of all kinds seemed to enter freely. After looking around for a few minutes, the young Englishman ascended the steps of a noble portico, and asked of a porter, as old and as lazy as a great man's domestic ought to be, for the seneschal named to him by the king. The corpulent janitor, with great politeness, put the stranger under the charge of a page, who ushered him to a chamber, in which he found another aged functionary of higher rank, with a comely face, a clear composed eye, and a brow which, having never been knit into gravity, intimated that the seneschal of Aix was a proficient in the philosophy of his royal master. He recognised Arthur the moment he addressed him.

“You speak northern French, fair sir; you have lighter hair and a fairer complexion than the natives of this country — You ask after Queen Margaret — By all these marks I read you English — Her Grace of England is at this moment paying a vow at the monastery of Mont Saint Victoire, and if your name be Arthur Philipson, I have commission to forward you to



her presence immediately — that is, as soon as you have tasted of the royal provision.”

The young man would have remonstrated, but the seneschal left him no leisure.

“Meat and mass,” he said, “never hindered work — it is perilous to youth to journey too far on an empty stomach — he himself would take a mouthful with the Queen’s guest, and pledge him to boot in a flask of old Hermitage.”

The board was covered with an alacrity which showed that hospitality was familiarly exercised in King René’s dominions. Pasties, dishes of game, the gallant boar’s-head, and other delicacies, were placed on the table, and the seneschal played the merry host, frequently apologising (unnecessarily) for showing an indifferent example, as it was his duty to carve before King René, and the good king was never pleased unless he saw him feed lustily as well as carve featly.

“But for you, sir guest, eat freely, since you may not see food again till sunset; for the good Queen takes her misfortunes so to heart that sighs are her food, and her tears a bottle of drink, as the Psalmist hath it. But I bethink me you will need steeds for yourself and your equipage to reach Mont Saint Victoire, which is seven miles from Aix.”



Arthur intimated that he had a guide and horses in attendance, and begged permission to take his adieu. The worthy seneschal, his fair round belly graced with a gold chain, accompanied him to the gate with a step, which a gentle fit of the gout had rendered uncertain, but which, he assured Arthur, would vanish before three days' use of the hot springs. Thiebault appeared before the gate, not with the tired steeds from which they had dismounted an hour since, but with fresh palfreys from the stable of the king.

"They are yours from the moment you have put foot in stirrup," said the seneschal; "the good King René never received back as his property a horse which he had lent to a guest; and that is perhaps one reason why this Highness and we of his household must walk often a-foot."

Here the seneschal exchanged greetings with his young visitor, who rode forth to seek Queen Margaret's place of temporary retirement at the celebrated monastery of Saint Victoire. He demanded of his guide in which direction it lay, who pointed, with an air of triumph, to a mountain three thousand feet and upwards in height, which arose at five or six miles' distance from the town, and which its bold and rocky summit rendered the most distinguished object



of the landscape. Thiebault spoke of it with unusual glee and energy, so much so as to lead Arthur to conceive that his trusty squire had not neglected to avail himself of the lavish hospitality of *Le bon Roy René*. Thiebault, however, continued to expatiate on the fame of the mountain and monastery. They derived their name, he said, from a great victory which was gained by a Roman general, named Caio Mario, against two large armies of Saracens with ultramontane names (the Teutones probably and Cimbri), in gratitude to Heaven for which victory Caio Mario vowed to build a monastery on the mountain, for the service of the Virgin Mary, in honour of whom he had been baptized. With all the importance of a local connoisseur, Thiebault proceeded to prove his general assertion by specific facts.

“Yonder,” he said, “was the camp of the Saracens, from which, when the battle was apparently decided, their wives and women rushed, with horrible screams, dishevelled hair, and the gestures of furies, and for a time prevailed in stopping the flight of the men.” He pointed out too the river, for access to which, cut off by the superior generalship of the Romans, the barbarians, whom he called Saracens, hazarded the action, and whose streams they empurpled with their blood. In short, he mentioned many



circumstances which showed how accurately tradition will preserve the particulars of ancient events, even whilst forgetting, mistating, and confounding dates, and persons.

Perceiving that Arthur lent him a not unwilling ear, — for it may be supposed that the education of a youth bred up in the heat of civil wars, was not well qualified to criticise his account of the wars of a distant period, — the Provençal, when he had exhausted this topic, drew up close to his master's side, and asked, in a suppressed tone, whether he knew, or was desirous of being made acquainted with, the cause of Margaret's having left Aix, to establish herself in the monastery of Saint Victoire?

"For the accomplishment of a vow," answered Arthur; "all the world knows it."

"All Aix knows the contrary," said Thiebault; "and I can tell you the truth, so I were sure it would not offend your seignoric."

"The truth can offend no reasonable man, so it be expressed in the terms of which Queen Margaret must be spoken in the presence of an Englishman."

Thus replied Arthur, willing to receive what information he could gather, and desirous, at the same time, to check the petulance of his attendant.

"I have nothing," replied his follower, "to



state in disparagement of the gracious Queen, whose only misfortune is, that, like her royal father, she has more titles than towns. Besides, I know well that you Englishmen, though you speak wildly of your sovereigns yourselves, will not permit others to fail in respect to them."

"Say on, then," answered Arthur.

"Your seignorie must know, then," said Thiebault, "that the good King René has been much disturbed by the deep melancholy which afflicted Queen Margaret, and has bent himself with all his power, to change it into a gayer humour. He made entertainments in public and in private; he assembled minstrels and troubadours, whose music and poetry might have drawn smiles from one on his death-bed. The whole country resounded with mirth and glee, and the gracious Queen could not stir abroad in the most private manner, but before she had gone a hundred paces, she lighted on an ambush, consisting of some pretty pageant, or festitious mummary, composed often by the good King himself, which interrupted her solitude, in purpose of relieving her heavy thoughts with some pleasant pastime. But the Queen's deep melancholy rejected all these modes of dispelling it, and at length she confined herself to her own apartments, and absolutely refused to see even her royal father, because he generally



brought into her presence those whose productions he thought likely to soothe her sorrow. Indeed she seemed to hear the harpers with loathing, and, excepting one wandering Englishman, who sung a rude and melancholy ballad, which threw her into a flood of tears, and to whom she gave a chain of price, she never seemed to look at, or be conscious of the presence of any one. And at length, as I have had the honour to tell your seignorie, she refused to see even her royal father unless he came alone; and that he found no heart to do."

"I wonder not at it," said the young man; "by the White Swan, I am rather surprised his mummary drove her not to frenzy."

"Something like it indeed took place," said Thiebault; and I will tell your seignorie how it chanced. You must know that good King René, unwilling to abandon his daughter to the foul fiend of melancholy, bethought him of making a grand effort. You must know further, that the King, powerful in all the craft of Troubadours and Jongleurs, is held in peculiar esteem for conducting mysteries, and other of those gamesome and delightful sports and processions, with which our holy church permits her graver ceremonies to be relieved and diversified, to the cheering of the hearts of all true children of religion. It is admitted that no one has



ever been able to approach his excellence in the arrangement of the Fête-Dieu; and the tune to which the devils cudgel King Herod, to the great edification of all Christian spectators, is of our good King's royal composition. He hath danced at Tarasconne in the ballet of Saint Martha and the Dragon, and was accounted in his own person, the only actor competent to present the Tarrasque. His Highness introduced also a new ritual into the consecration of the Boy Bishop, and composed an entire set of grotesque music for the Festival of Asses. In short, his Grace's strength lies in those pleasing and becoming festivities which strew the path of edification with flowers, and send men dancing and singing on their way to Heaven.

Now the good King René, feeling his own genius for such recreative compositions, resolved to exert it to the utmost, in the hope that he might thereby relieve the melancholy in which his daughter was plunged; and which infected all that approached her. It chanced, some short time since, that the Queen was absent for certain days, I know not where or on what business, but it gave the good King time to make his preparations. So when his daughter returned, he with much importunity prevailed on her to make part of a religious procession to Saint Sauveur, the principal church in Aix. The



Queen, innocent of what was intended, decked herself with solemnity, to witness and partake of what she expected would prove a work of grave piety. But no sooner had she appeared on the esplanade in front of the palace, than more than an hundred masks, dressed up like Turks, Jews, Saracens, Moors, and I know not whom besides, crowded around, to offer her their homage, in the character of the Queen of Sheba; and a grotesque piece of music called them to arrange themselves for a ludicrous ballet, in which they addressed the Queen in the most entertaining manner, and with the most extravagant gestures. The Queen, stunned with the noise, and affronted with the petulance of this unexpected onset, would have gone back into the palace; but the doors had been shut by the King's order so soon as she set forth; and her retreat in that direction was cut off. Finding herself excluded from the palace, the Queen advanced to the front of the façade, and endeavoured by signs and words to appease the hubbub, but the maskers, who had their instructions, only answered with songs, music, and shouts."

"I would," said Arthur, "there had been a score of English yeomen in presence, with their quarter-staves, to teach the bawling villains respect for one that has worn the crown of England!"



“All the noise that was made before was silence and soft music,” continued Thiebault, “till that when the good King himself appeared, grotesquely dressed in the character of King Solomon” — —

“To whom, of all princes, he has the least resemblance,” said Arthur — —

“With such capers and gesticulations of welcome to the Queen of Sheba, as, I am assured by those who saw it, would have brought a dead man alive again, or killed a living man with laughing. Among other properties, he had in his hand a truncheon, somewhat formed like a fool’s bauble” — —

“A most fit sceptre for such a sovereign,” said Arthur — —

“Which was headed,” continued Thiebault, “by a model of the Jewish Temple, finely gilded and curiously cut in pasteboard. He managed this with the utmost grace, and delighted every spectator by his gaiety and activity, excepting the Queen, who, the more he skipped and capered, seemed to be the more incensed, until, on his approaching her to conduct her to the procession, she seemed roused to a sort of frenzy, struck the truncheon out of his hand, and breaking through the crowd, who felt as if a tigress had leapt amongst them from a showman’s cart, rushed into the royal court-yard. Ere the order



of the scenic representation, which her violence had interrupted, could be restored, the Queen again issued forth, mounted and attended by two or three English cavaliers of her Majesty's suite. She forced her way through the crowd, without regarding either their safety or her own, flew like a hail-storm along the streets, and never drew bridle till she was as far up this same Mont Saint Victoire as the road would permit. She was then received into the convent and has since remained there; and a vow of penance is the pretext to cover over the quarrel betwixt her and her father."

"How long may it be," said Arthur, "since these things chanced?"

"It is but three days since Queen Margaret left Aix in the manner I have told you. — But we are come as far up the mountain as men usually ride. See, yonder is the monastery rising betwixt two huge rocks, which form the very top of Mont Saint Victoire. There is no more open ground than is afforded by the cleft, into which the convent of Saint Mary of Victory is, as it were, niched; and the access is guarded by the most dangerous precipices. To ascend the mountain, you must keep that narrow path, which, winding and turning among the cliffs, leads at length to the summit of the hill, and the gate of the monastery."



“And what becomes of you and the horses?” said Arthur.

“We will rest,” said Thiebault, “in the hospital maintained by the good fathers at the bottom of the mountain, for the accommodation of those who attend on pilgrims; — for I promise you the shrine is visited by many who come from afar, and are attended both by man and horse. — Care not for me, — I shall be first under cover; but there muster yonder in the west some threatening clouds, from which your seignorie may suffer inconvenience, unless you reach the convent in time. I will give you an hour to do the feat, and will say you are as active as a chamois hunter, if you reach it within the time.”

Arthur looked around him, and did indeed remark a mustering of clouds in the distant west, which threatened soon to change the character of the day, which had hitherto been brilliantly clear, and so serene that the falling of a leaf might have been heard. He therefore turned him to the steep and rocky path which ascended the mountain, sometimes by scaling almost precipitous rocks, and sometimes by reaching their tops by a more circuitous process. It winded through thickets of wild boxwood and other low aromatic shrubs, which afforded some pasture for the mountain-goats, but were a bitter



annoyance to the traveller who had to press through them. Such obstacles were so frequent, that the full hour allowed by Thiebault had elapsed before he stood on the summit of Mont Saint Victoire, and in front of the singular convent of the same name.

We have already said, that the crest of the mountain, consisting entirely of one bare and solid rock, was divided by a cleft or opening into two heads or peaks, between which the convent was built, occupying all the space between them. The front of the building was of the most ancient and sombre cast of the old Gothic, or rather, as it has been termed, the Saxon; and in that respect corresponded with the savage exterior of the naked cliffs, of which the structure seemed to make a part, and by which it was entirely surrounded, excepting a small open space of more level ground, where, at the expense of much toil, and by carrying earth up the hill, from different spots where they could collect it in small quantities, the good fathers had been able to arrange the accommodations of a garden.

A bell summoned a lay-brother, the porter of this singularly situated monastery, to whom Arthur announced himself as an English merchant, Philipson by name, who came to pay his duty to Queen Margaret. The porter, with



much respect, showed the stranger into the convent, and ushered him into a parlour, which, looking towards Aix, commanded an extensive and splendid prospect over the southern and western parts of Provence. This was the direction in which Arthur had approached the mountain from Aix; but the circuitous path by which he had ascended had completely carried him round the hill. The western side of the monastery, to which the parlour looked, commanded the noble view we have mentioned; and a species of balcony, which, connecting the two twin crags, at this place not above four or five yards asunder, ran along the front of the building, and appeared to be constructed for the purpose of enjoying it. But on stepping from one of the windows of the parlour upon this battlemented bartizan, Arthur became aware that the wall on which the parapet rested stretched along the edge of a precipice, which sunk sheer down five hundred feet at least from the foundations of the convent. Surprised and startled at finding himself on so giddy a verge, Arthur turned his eyes from the gulf beneath him to admire the distant landscape, partly illumined, with ominous lustre, by the now westerly sun. The setting beams showed in dark red splendour a vast variety of hill and dale, champaign and cultivated ground, with towns, churches, and



castles, some of which rose from among trees, while others seemed founded on rocky eminences; others again lurked by the side of streams or lakes, to which the heat and drought of the climate naturally attracted them.

The rest of the landscape presented similar objects when the weather was serene, but they were now rendered indistinct, or altogether obliterated, by the sullen shade of the approaching clouds, which gradually spread over great part of the horizon, and threatened altogether to eclipse the sun, though the lord of the horizon still struggled to maintain his influence, and, like a dying hero, seemed most glorious even in the moment of defeat. Wild sounds, like groans and howls, formed by the wind in the numerous caverns of the rocky mountain, added to the terrors of the scene, and seemed to foretell the fury of some distant storm, though the air in general was even unnaturally calm and breathless. In gazing on this extraordinary scene, Arthur did justice to the monks who had chosen this wild and grotesque situation, from which they could witness Nature in her wildest and grandest demonstrations, and compare the nothingness of humanity with her awful convulsions.

So much was Arthur awed by the scene before him, that he had almost forgotten, while



gazing from the bartizan, the important business which had brought him to this place, when it was suddenly recalled by finding himself in the presence of Margaret of Anjou, who, not seeing him in the parlour of reception, had stepped upon the balcony, that she might meet with him the sooner.

The Queen's dress was black, without any ornament except a gold coronal of an inch in breadth, restraining her long black tresses, of which advancing years, and misfortunes, had partly altered the hue. There was placed within the circlet a black plume with a red rose, the last of the season, which the good father who kept the garden had presented to her that morning, as the badge of her husband's house. Care, fatigue, and sorrow, seemed to dwell on her brow and her features. To another messenger, she would in all probability have administered a sharp rebuke, for not being alert in his duty to receive her as she entered; but Arthur's age and appearance corresponded with that of her loved and lost son. He was the son of a lady whom Margaret had loved with almost sisterly affection, and the presence of Arthur continued to excite in the dethroned Queen the same feelings of maternal tenderness which they had awakened on their first meeting in the Cathedral of Strasburg. She raised him as he kneeled



at her feet, spoke to him with much kindness, and encouraged him to detail at full length his father's message, and such other news as his brief residence at Dijon had made him acquainted with.

She demanded which way Duke Charles had moved with his army.

«As I was given to understand by the master of his artillery,” said Arthur, «towards the Lake of Neufchatel, on which side he proposes his first attack on the Swiss.”

«The headstrong fool!” said Queen Margaret — «he resembles the poor lunatic, who went to the summit of the mountain, that he might meet the rain half way. — Does thy father then,” continued Margaret, «advise me to give up the last remains of the extensive territories once the dominions of our royal House, and for some thousand crowns, and the paltry aid of a few hundred lances, to relinquish what is left of our patrimony to our proud and selfish kinsman of Burgundy, who extends his claim to our all, and affords so little help, or even promise of help, in return?”

«I should have ill discharged my father's commission,” said Arthur, «if I had left your Highness to think that he recommends so great a sacrifice. He feels most deeply the Duke of Burgundy's grasping desire of dominion. Ne-



vertheless, he thinks that Provence must, on King René's death, or sooner, fall either to the share of Duke Charles, or to Louis of France, whatever opposition your Highness may make to such a destination; and it may be that my father, as a knight and a soldier, hopes much from obtaining the means to make another attempt on Britain. But the decision must rest with your Highness."

"Young man," said the Queen, "the contemplation of a question so doubtful almost deprives me of reason."

As she spoke, she sunk down as one who needs rest, on a stone-seat placed on the very verge of the balcony, regardless of the storm, which now began to rise with dreadful gusts of wind, the course of which being intermitted and altered by the crags round which they howled, it seemed as if in very deed Boreas, and Eurus, and Caurus, unchaining the winds from every quarter of heaven, were contending for mastery around the convent of our Lady of Victory. Amid this tumult, and amid billows of mist which concealed the bottom of the precipice, and masses of clouds which racked fearfully over their heads, the roar of the descending waters rather resembled the fall of cataracts than the rushing of torrents of rain. The seat on which Margaret had placed herself was in a



considerable degree sheltered from the storm, but its eddies, varying in every direction, often tossed aloft her dishevelled hair; and we cannot describe the appearance of her noble and beautiful, yet ghastly and wasted features, agitated strongly by anxious hesitation, and conflicting thoughts, unless to those of our readers who have had the advantage of having seen our inimitable Siddons in such a character as this. Arthur, confounded by anxiety and terror, could only beseech her Majesty to retire before the fury of the approaching storm, into the interior of the convent.

“No,” she replied with firmness; “roofs and walls have ears, and monks, though they have forsworn the world, are not the less curious to know what passes beyond their cells. It is in this place you must hear what I have to say; as a soldier, you should scorn a blast of wind or a shower of rain; and to me, who have often held counsel amidst the sound of trumpets and clash of arms, prompt for instant fight, the war of elements is an unnoticed trifle. I tell thee, young Arthur Vere, as I would to your father — as I would to my son — if indeed Heaven had left such a blessing to a wretch forlorn” — —

She paused, and then proceeded.



«I tell thee, as I would have told my beloved Edward, that Margaret, whose resolutions were once firm and immovable as these rocks among which we are placed, is now doubtful and variable as the clouds which are drifting around us. I told your father, in the joy of meeting once more a subject of such inappreciable loyalty, of the sacrifices I would make to assure the assistance of Charles of Burgundy, to so gallant an undertaking as that proposed to him by the faithful Oxford. But since I saw him, I have had cause of deep reflection. I met my aged father only to offend, and, I say it with shame, to insult the old man in presence of his people. Our tempers are as opposed as the sunshine, which a short space since gilded a serene and beautiful landscape, differs from the tempests which are now wasting it. I spurned with open scorn and contempt what he, in his mistaken affection, had devised for means of consolation, and disgusted with the idle follies which he had devised for curing the melancholy of a dethroned Queen, a widowed spouse — and, alas! a childless mother, — I retired hither from the noisy and idle mirth, which was the bitterest aggravation of my sorrows. Such and so gentle is René's temper, that even my unfilial conduct will not diminish my influence over him; and if your father had



announced, that the Duke of Burgundy, like a knight and a sovereign, had cordially and nobly entered into the plan of the faithful Oxford, I could have found it in my heart to obtain the cession of territory his cold and ambitious policy requires, in order to ensure the assistance, which he now postpones to afford, till he has gratified his own haughty humour by settling needless quarrels with his unoffending neighbours. Since I have been here, and calmness and solitude have given me time to reflect, I have thought on the offences I have given the old man, and on the wrongs I was about to do him. My father, let me do him justice, is also the father of his people. They have dwelt under their vines and fig-trees, in ignoble ease perhaps, but free from oppression and exaction, and their happiness has been that of their good King. Must I change all this? — Must I aid in turning over these contented people to a fierce, headlong, arbitrary prince? — May I not break even the easy and thoughtless heart of my poor old father, should I succeed in urging him to do so? — These are questions which I shudder even to ask myself. On the other hand, to disappoint the toils, the venturous hopes of your father, to forego the only opportunity which may ever again offer itself, of revenge on the bloody traitors of York, and restoration of the House



of Lancaster! — Arthur, the scene around us is not so convulsed by the fearful tempest, and the driving clouds, as my mind is by doubt and uncertainty."

"Alas," replied Arthur, "I am too young and inexperienced to be your Majesty's adviser in a case so arduous. I would my father had been in presence himself."

"I know what he would have said," replied the Queen; "but knowing all, I despair of aid from human counsellors — I have sought others, but they also are deaf to my entreaties. Yes, Arthur, Margaret's misfortunes have rendered her superstitious. Know, that beneath these rocks, and under the foundation of this convent, there runs a cavern, entering by a secret and defended passage a little to the westward of the summit, and running through the mountain, having an opening to the south, from which, as from this bartizan, you can view the landscape so lately seen from this balcony, or the strife of winds and confusion of clouds which we now behold. In the middle of this cavernous thoroughfare is a natural piort, or perforation, of great, but unknown depth. A stone dropped into it is heard to dash from side to side, until the noise of its descent, thundering from cliff to cliff, dies away in distant and faint tinkling, less loud than that of



a sheep's bell at a mile's distance. The common people, in their jargon, call this fearful gulf, Lou Garagoule; and the traditions of the monastery annex wild and fearful recollection to a place in itself sufficiently terrible. Oracles, it is said, spoke from thence in pagan days, by subterranean voices, arising from the abyss; and from these the Roman general is said to have heard, in strange and uncouth rhymes, promises of the victory which gives name to this mountain. These oracles, it is averred, may be yet consulted after performance of strange rites, in which heathen ceremonies are mixed with Christian acts of devotion. The abbots of Mont Saint Victoire have denounced the consultation of Lou Garagoule, and the spirits who reside there, to be criminal. But as the sin may be expiated by presents to the church, by masses, and penances, the door is sometimes opened by the complaisant fathers to those whose daring curiosity leads them, at all risks, and by whatever means, to search into futurity. Arthur, I have made the experiment, and am even now returned from the gloomy cavern, in which, according to the traditional ritual, I have spent six hours by the margin of the gulf, a place so dismal, that after its horrors even this tempestuous scene is refreshing."



The Queen stopped, and Arthur, the more struck with the wild tale, that it reminded him of his place of imprisonment at La Ferette, asked anxiously, if her enquiries had obtained any answer.

“None whatever,” replied the unhappy Princess. “The demons of Garagoule, if there be such, are deaf to the suit of an unfortunate wretch like me, to whom neither friends nor fiends will afford counsel or assistance. It is my father’s circumstances which prevent my instant and strong resolution. Were my own claims on this piping and paltry nation of Troubadours alone interested, I could, for the chance of once more setting my foot in merry England, as easily and willingly resign them, and their paltry coronet, as I commit to the storm this idle emblem of the royal rank which I have lost.”

As Margaret spoke, she tore from her hair the sable feather and rose which the tempest had detached from the circlet in which they were placed, and tossed them from the battlement with a gesture of wild energy. They were instantly whirled off in a bickering eddy of the agitated clouds, which swept the feather far distant into empty space, through which the eye could not pursue it. But while that of Arthur involuntarily strove to follow its



course, a contrary gust of wind caught the red rose, and drove it back against his breast, so that it was easy for him to catch hold of and retain it.

“Joy, joy, and good fortune, royal mistress!” he said, returning to her the emblematic flower; “the tempest brings back the badge of Lancaster to its proper owner.”

“I accept the omen,” said Margaret; “but it concerns yourself, noble youth; and not me. The feather, which is borne away to waste and desolation, is Margaret’s emblem. My eyes will never see the restoration of the line of Lancaster. But you will live to behold it, and to aid to achieve it, and to dye our red rose deeper yet in the blood of tyrants and traitors. My thoughts are so strangely poised, that a feather or a flower may turn the scale. But my head is still giddy, and my heart sick. — To morrow you shall see another Margaret, and till then adieu.”

It was time to retire, for the tempest began to be mingled with fiercer showers of rain. When they re-entered the parlour, the Queen clapped her hands, and two female attendants entered.

“Let the Father Abbot know,” she said, “that it is our desire that this young gentleman receive for this night such hospitality as befits



an esteemed friend of ours. — Till to-morrow, young sir, farewell."

With a countenance which betrayed not the late emotion of her mind, and with a stately courtesy, that would have become her when she graced the halls of Windsor, she extended her hand, which the youth saluted respectfully. After her leaving the parlour, the Abbot entered, and in his attention to Arthur's entertainment and accomodation for the evening, showed his anxiety to meet and obey Queen Margaret's wishes.



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## CHAPTER XXX.

*— Want you a man  
Experienced in the world and its affairs?  
Here he is for your purpose. — He's a monk.  
He hath forsworn the world and all its work —  
The rather that he knows it passing well,  
Special the worst of it, for he's a monk.*

*Old Play.*

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WHILE the dawn of the morning was yet grey, Arthur was awakened by a loud ringing at the gate of the monastery, and presently afterwards the porter entered the cell which had been allotted to him for his lodgings, to tell him, that, if his name was Arthur Philipson, a brother of their order had brought him dispatches from his father. The youth started up, hastily attired himself, and was introduced, in the parlour,



to a Carmelite monk, being of the same order with the community of Saint Victoire.

“I have ridden many a mile, young man, to present you with this letter,” said the monk, “having undertaken to your father that it should be delivered without delay. I came to Aix last night during the storm, and learning at the palace that you had ridden hither, I mounted as soon as the tempest abated, and here I am.”

“I am beholden to you, father,” said the youth; “and if I could repay your pains with a small donative to your convent” —

“By no means,” answered the good father; “I took my personal trouble out of friendship to your father, and mine own errand led me this way. The expenses of my long journey have been amply provided for. But open your packet, I can answer your question at leisure.”

The young man accordingly stepped into an embrasure of the window, and read as follows: —

“SON ARTHUR, — Touching the state of the country, in so far as concerns the safety of travelling, know, that the same is precarious. The Duke hath taken the towns of Brie and Granson, and put to death five hundred men, whom he made prisoners in garrison there. But the Confederates are approaching with a large force, and God will judge for the right.



Howsoever the game may go, these are sharp wars, in which little quarter is spoken of on either side, and therefore there is no safety for men of our profession, till something decisive shall happen. In the meantime, you may assure the widowed lady, that our correspondent continues well disposed to purchase the property which she has in hand; but will scarce be able to pay the price till his present pressing affairs shall be settled, which I hope will be in time to permit us to embark the funds in the profitable adventure I told our friend of. I have employed a friar, travelling to Provence, to carry this letter, which I trust will come safe. The bearer may be trusted.

“Your affectionate father,  
“JOHN PHILIPSON.”

Arthur easily comprehended the latter part of the epistle, and rejoiced he had received it at so critical a moment. He questioned the Carmelite on the amount of the Duke's army, which the Monk stated to amount to sixty thousand men, while he said the Confederates, though making every exertion, had not yet been able to assemble the third part of that number. The young Ferrand de Vaudemont was with their army, and had received, it was thought, some secret assistance from France; but as he was little known in arms, and had few followers,



the empty title of general which he bore, added little to the strength of the Confederates. Upon the whole, he reported, that every chance appeared to be in favour of Charles, and Arthur, who looked upon success as presenting the only chance in favour of his father's enterprise, was not a little pleased to find it ensured, as far as depended on a great superiority of force. He had no leisure to make farther enquiries, for the Queen at that moment entered the apartment, and the Carmelite, learning her quality, withdrew from her presence in deep reverence.

The paleness of her complexion still bespoke the fatigues of the day preceding; but as she graciously bestowed on Arthur the greetings of the morning, her voice was firm, her eye clear, and her countenance steady. "I meet you," she said, "not as I left you, but determined in my purpose. I am satisfied, that if René does not voluntarily yield up his throne of Provence, by some step like that which we purpose, he will be hurled from it by violence, in which, it may be, his life will not be spared. We will, therefore, to work with all speed — the worst is, that I cannot leave this convent till I have made the necessary penances for having visited the Caragoule, without performing which, I were no Christian woman. When you return to Aix, enquire at the palace for my secretary,



with whom this line will give you credence. I have, even before this door of hope opened to me, endeavoured to form an estimate of King René's situation, and collected the documents for that purpose. Tell him to send me, duly sealed, and under fitting charge, the small cabinet hooped with silver. Hours of penance for past errors may be employed to prevent others; and, from the contents of that cabinet, I shall learn whether I am, in this weighty matter, sacrificing my father's interests to my own half-desperate hopes. But of this I have little or no doubt. I can cause the deeds of resignation and transference to be drawn up here under my own direction, and arrange the execution of them when I return to Aix, which shall be the first moment after my penance is concluded."

"And this letter, gracious madam," said Arthur, "will inform you what events are approaching, and of what importance it may be to take time by the fore-lock. Place me but in possession of these momentous deeds, and I will travel night and day till I reach the Duke's camp. I shall find him most likely in the moment of victory, and with his heart too much open to refuse a boon to the royal kinswoman who is surrendering to him all. We will — we must — in such an hour, obtain



princely succours; and we shall soon see if the licentious Edward of York, the savage Richard, the treacherous and perjured Clarence, are hereafter to be lords of merry England, or whether they must give place to a more rightful sovereign and better man. But O! royal madam, all depends on haste."

"True — yet a few days may — nay, must — cast the die between Charles and his opponents; and, ere making so great a surrender, it were as well to be assured that he whom we would propitiate, is in capacity to assist us. All the events of a tragic and varied life have led me to see there is no such thing as an inconsiderable enemy. I will make haste, however, trusting in the interim we may have good news from the banks of the lake at Neufchatel."

"But who shall be employed to draw these most important deeds?" said the young man.

Margaret mused ere she replied, — "The father gurdian is complaisant, and I think faithful; but I would not willing by repose confidence in one of the Provençal monks. Stay, let me think — your father says the Carmelite who brought the letter may be trusted — he shall do the turn. He is a stranger, and will be silent for a piece of money. Farewell, Arthur de Vere, — You will be treated with all hospitality by my father. If thou dost receive farther tidings, thou wilt let me know them; or, should



I have instructions to send, thou wilt hear from me. — So, benedicite."

Arthur proceeded to wind down the mountain at a much quicker pace than he had ascended on the day before. The weather was now gloriously serene, and the beauties of vegetation, in a country where it never totally slumbers, were at once delicious and refreshing. His thoughts wandered from the crags of Mont Saint Victoire, to the cliff of the canton of Unterwalden, and fancy recalled the moments when his walks through such scenery were not solitary, but when there was a form by his side, whose simple beauty was engraved on his memory. Such thoughts were of a preoccupying nature; and I grieve to say, that they entirely drowned the recollection of the mysterious caution given him by his father, intimating that Arthur might not be able to comprehend such letters as he should receive from him, till they were warmed before a fire.

The first thing which reminded him of this singular caution, was the seeing a chafing-dish of charcoal in the kitchen of the hostelrie at the bottom of the mountain, where he found Thiebault and his horses. This was the first fire which he had seen since receiving his father's letter, and it reminded him not unnaturally of what the Earl had recommended. Great was



his surprise to see, that after exposing the paper to the fire as if to dry it, a word emerged in an important passage of the letter, and the concluding words now read, — “The bearer may *not* be trusted.” Wellnigh choked with shame and vexation, Arthur could think of no other remedy than instantly to return to the convent, and acquaint the Queen with this discovery, which he hoped still to convey to her in time to prevent any risk being incurred by the Carmelite’s treachery.

Incensed at himself, and eager to redeem his fault, he bent his manly breast against the steep hill, which was probably never scaled in so short time as by the young heir of De Vere; for, within forty minutes from his commencing the ascent, he stood breathless and panting in the presence of Queen Margaret, who was alike surprised at his appearance and his exhausted condition.

“Trust not the Carmelite!” he exclaimed — “You are betrayed, noble Queen, and it is by my negligence. Here is my dagger — bid me strike it into my heart!”

Margaret demanded and obtained a more special explanation, and when it was given, she said, “It is an unhappy chance; but your father’s instructions ought to have been more distinct. I have told yonder Carmelite the



purpose of the contracts, and engaged with him to draw them. He has but now left me to serve at the choir. There is no withdrawing the confidence I have unhappily placed; but I can easily prevail with the Father Guardian to prevent the Monk from leaving the convent till we are indifferent to his secrecy. It is our best chance to secure it, and we will take care that what inconvenience he sustains by his detention shall be well recompensed. Meanwhile, rest thou, good Arthur, and undo the throat of thy mantle. Poor youth, thou art wellnigh exhausted with thy haste."

Arthur obeyed, and sat down on a seat in the parlour; for the speed which he had exerted rendered him almost incapable of standing.

"If I could but see," he said, "the false monk, I would find a way to charm him to secrecy!"

"Better leave him to me," said the Queen; "and in a word, I forbid you to meddle with him. The coif can treat better with the cowl than the casque can do. Say no more of him. I joy to see you wear around your neck the holy relic I bestowed on you; — but what Moorish charmlet is that you wear beside it? Alas! I need not ask. Your heightened colour, almost as deep as when you entered a quarter of an hour hence, confesses a true love token.



Alas! poor boy, hast thou not only such a share of thy country's woes to bear, but also thine own load of affliction, not the less poignant now that future time will show thee how fantastic it is! Margaret of Anjou could once have aided wherever thy affections were placed; but now she can only contribute to the misery of her friends, not to their happiness. But this lady of the charm, Arthur, is she fair — is she wise and virtuous — is she of noble birth — and does she love?" — She perused his countenance with the glance of an eagle, and continued, "To all, thou wouldst answer Yes, if shamefacedness permitted thee. Love her then in turn, my gallant boy, for love is the parent of brave actions. Go, my noble youth — high-born and loyal, valorous and virtuous, enamoured and youthful, to what mayst thou not rise? The chivalry of ancient Europe only lives in a bosom like thine. Go, and let the praises of a Queen fire thy bosom with the love of honour and achievement. In three days we meet at Aix."

Arthur, highly gratified with the Queen's condescension, once more left her presence.

Returning down the mountain with a speed very different from that which he had used in the ascent, he again found his Provençal squire, who had remained in much surprise at witness-



ing the confusion in which his master had left the inn, almost immediately after he had entered it without any apparent haste or agitation. Arthur explained his hasty return by alleging he had forgot his purse at the convent. "Nay, in that case," said Thiebault, "considering what you left and where you left it, I do not wonder at your speed, though, our Lady save me, as I never saw living creature, save a goat with a wolf at his heels, make his way over crag and briers with half such rapidity as you did."

They reached Aix after about an hour's riding, and Arthur lost no time in waiting upon the good King René, who gave him a kind reception, both in respect of the letter from the Duke of Burgundy, and in consideration of his being an Englishman, the avowed subject of the unfortunate Margaret. The placable monarch soon forgave his young guest the want of complaisance, with which he had eschewed to listen to his compositions; and Arthur speedily found, that to apologize for his want of breeding in that particular, was likely to lead to a great deal more rehearsing than he could find patience to listen to. He could only avoid the old King's extreme desire to recite his own poems, and perform his own music, engaging him in speaking of his daughter Margaret. Arthur had been sometimes induced



to doubt the influence which the Queen boasted herself to possess over her aged father; but on being acquainted with him personally, he became convinced that her powerful understanding and violent passions inspired the feebleminded and passive King with a mixture of pride, affection, and fear, which united to give her the most ample authority over him.

Although she had parted with him but a day or two since, and in a manner so ungracious on her side, René was as much overjoyed at hearing of the probability of her speedy return, as the fondest father could have been at the prospect of being reunited to the most dutiful child, whom he had not seen for years. The old King was impatient as a boy for the day of her arrival, and, still strangely unenlightened on the difference of her taste from his own, he was with difficulty induced to lay aside a project of meeting her in the character of old Palemon, —

“The prince of shepherds, and their pride,”  
at the head of an Arcadian procession of nymphs and swains, to inspire whose choral dances and songs, every pipe and tambourine in the country was to be placed in requisition. Even the old seneschal, however, intimated his disapprobation of this species of *joyeuse entrée*; so that René suffered himself at length to be persuaded that



the Queen was too much occupied by the religious impressions to which she had been of late exposed, to receive any agreeable sensation from sights or sounds of levity. The King gave way to reasons which he could not sympathize with; and thus Margaret escaped the shock of a welcome, which would perhaps have driven her in her impatience back to the mountain of Saint Victoire, and the sable cavern of Lou Garagoule.

During the time of her absence, the days of the court of Provence were employed in sports and rejoicings of every description; tilting at the barrier with blunted spears, riding at the ring, parties for hare-hunting and falconry, frequented by the youth of both sexes, in the company of whom the King delighted, while the evenings were consumed in dancing and music.

Arthur could not but be sensible, that not long since all this would have made him perfectly happy; but the last months of his existence had developed his understanding and passions. He was now initiated in the actual business of human life, and looked on its amusements with an air of something like contempt; so that among the young and gay noblesse, who composed this merry court, he acquired the title of the youthful philosopher, which was not bestowed upon



him, it may be supposed, as inferring any thing of peculiar compliment.

On the fourth day news were received, by an express messenger, that Queen Margaret would enter Aix before the hour of noon, to resume her residence in her father's palace. The good King René seemed, as it drew nigh, to fear the interview with his daughter as much as he had previously desired it, and contrived to make all around him partake of his fidgety anxiety. He tormented his steward and cooks to recollect what dishes they had ever observed her to taste of with approbation — he pressed the musicians to remember the tunes which she approved, and when one of them boldly replied he had never known her Majesty endure any strain with patience, the old monarch threatened to turn him out of his service for slandering the taste of his daughter. The banquet was ordered to be served at half past eleven, as if accelerating it would have had the least effect upon hurrying the arrival of the expected guests; and the old King, with his napkin over his arm, traversed the hall from window to window, wearying every one with questions, whether they saw any thing of the Queen of England. Exactly as the bells tolled noon, the Queen, with a very small retinue, chiefly English, and in mourning habits like herself,



rode into the town of Aix. King René, at the head of his court, failed not to descend from the front of his stately palace, and move along the street to meet his daughter. Lofty, proud, and jealous of incurring ridicule, Margaret was not pleased with this public greeting in the market-place. But she was desirous at present to make amends for her late petulance, and therefore she descended from her palfrey; and although something shocked at seeing René equipped with a napkin, she humbled herself to bend the knee to him, asking at once his blessing and forgiveness.

“Thou hast — thou hast my blessing, my suffering dove,” said the simple King to the proudest and most impatient princess that ever wept for a lost crown. — “And for thy pardon, how canst thou ask it, who never didst me an offence since God made me father to so gracious a child? — Rise, I say rise — nay, it is for me to ask thy pardon — True, I said in my ignorance and thought within myself, that my heart had indited a goodly thing — but it vexed thee. It is therefore for me to crave pardon.” — And down sunk good King René upon both knees; and the people, who are usually captivated with any thing resembling the trick of the scene, applauded with much noise, and some smothered laughter, a situation, in which the royal daugh-



ter and her parent seemed about to rehearse the scene of the Roman Charity.

Margaret, sensitively alive to shame, and fully aware that her present position was sufficiently ludicrous in its publicity at least, signed sharply to Arthur, whom she saw in the King's suite, to come to her; and, using his arm to rise, she muttered to him aside, and in English, — "To what saint shall I vow myself, that I may preserve patience when I so much need it!"

"For pity's sake, royal madam, recall your firmness of mind and composure," whispered her esquire, who felt at the moment more embarrassed than honoured by his distinguished office, for he could feel that the Queen actually trembled with vexation and impatience.

They at length resumed their route to the palace, the father and daughter arm in arm, a posture most agreeable to Margaret, who could bring herself to endure her father's effusions of tenderness, and the general tone of his conversation, so that he was not overheard by others. In the same manner, she bore with laudable patience the teasing attentions which he addressed to her at table, noticed some of his particular courtiers, enquired after others, led the way to his favourite subjects of conversation on poetry, painting, and music, till the good King was as much delighted with the unwonted



civilities of his daughter, as ever was lover with the favourable confessions of his mistress, when, after years of warm courtship, the ice of her bosom is at length thawed. It cost the haughty Margaret an effort to bend herself to play this part — her pride rebuked her for stooping to flatter her father's foibles, in order to bring him over to the resignation of his dominions — yet having undertaken to do so, and so much having been already hazarded upon this sole remaining chance of success in an attack upon England, she saw, or was willing to see, no alternative.

Betwixt the banquet, and the ball by which it was to be followed, the Queen sought an opportunity of speaking to Arthur.

“Bad news, my sage counsellor,” she said. “The Carmelite never returned to the convent after the service was over. Having learned that you had come back in great haste, he had, I suppose, concluded he might stand in suspicion, so he left the convent of Mont Saint Victoire.”

“We must hasten the measures which your Majesty has resolved to adopt,” answered Arthur.

“I will speak with my father to-morrow. Meanwhile, you must enjoy the pleasures of the evening, for to you they may be pleasures. —



Young lady of Boisgelin, I give you this cavalier to be your partner for the evening."

The black-eyed and pretty Provençale curtsied with due decorum, and glanced at the handsome young Englishman with an eye of approbation; but whether afraid of his character as a philosopher, or his doubtful rank, added the saving clause, — "If my mother approves."

"Your mother, damsel, will scarce, I think, disapprove of any partner whom you receive from the hands of Margaret of Anjou. Happy privilege of youth," she added with a sigh, as the youthful couple went off to take their place in *bransle*,\* "which can snatch a flower even on the roughest road."

Arthur acquitted himself so well during the evening, that perhaps the young Countess was only sorry that so gay and handsome a gallant limited his compliments and attentions within the cold bounds of that courtesy enjoined by the rules of ceremony.

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\* Bransle, in English, brawl, a species of dance.



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## CHAPTER XXXI.

*For I have given here my full consent,  
To undeck the pompous body of a king,  
Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.*

*Richard II.*

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THE next day opened a grave scene. King René had not forgotten to arrange the pleasures of the day, when, to his horror and discomfiture, Margaret demanded an interview upon serious business. If there was a proposition in the world which René from his soul detested, it was any that related to the very name of business.

“What was it that his child wanted?” he said. “Was it money? He would give her whatever ready sums he had, though he owned



his exchequer was somewhat bare; yet he had received his income for the season. It was ten thousand crowns. How much should he desire to be paid to her? — the half — three parts — or the whole? All was at her command."

"Alas, my dear father," said Margaret, "it is not my affairs, but your own, on which I desire to speak with you."

"If the affairs are mine," said René, "I am surely master to put them off to another day — to some rainy dull day, fit for no better purpose. See, my love, the hawking party are all on their steeds and ready — the horses are neighing and pawing — the gallants and maidens mounted, and ready with hawk on fist — the spaniels struggling in the leash. It were a sin, with wind and weather to friend, to lose so lovely a morning."

"Let them ride their way," said Queen Margaret, "and find their sport; for the matter I have to speak concerning involves honour and rank, life and means of living."

"Nay, but I have to hear and judge between Calezon and John of Acqua Mortis, the two most celebrated Troubadours."

"Postpone their cause till to-morrow," said Margaret, "and dedicate an hour or two to more important affairs."

"If you are peremptory," replied King René,



"you are aware, my child, I cannot say you nay."

And with reluctance he gave orders for the hawkers to go on and follow their sport, as he could not attend them that day.

The old King then suffered himself, like an unwilling greyhound withheld from the chase, to be led into a separate apartment. To ensure privacy, Margaret stationed her secretary Mordaunt, with Arthur, in an antechamber, giving them orders to prevent all intrusion.

"Nay, for myself, Margaret," said the good-natured old man, "since it must be, I consent to be put *au secret*; but why keep old Mordaunt from taking a walk in this beautiful morning; and why prevent young Arthur from going forth with the rest? I promise you, though they term him a philosopher, yet he showed as light a pair of heels last night, with the young Countess de Boisgelin, as any gallant in Provence."

"They are come from a country," said Margaret, "in which men are trained from infancy to prefer their duty to their pleasure."

The poor King, led into the council-closet, saw with internal shuddering the fatal cabinet of ebony, bound with silver, which had never been opened but to overwhelm him with weariness, and dolefully calculated how many yawns he must strangle ere he sustained the consideration



of its contents. They proved, however, when laid before him, of a kind that excited even his interest, though painfully.

His daughter presented him with a short and clear view of the debts which were secured on his dominions, and for which they were mortgaged in various pieces and parcels. She then showed him, by another schedule, the large claims for which payment was instantly demanded, to discharge which no funds could be found or assigned. The King defended himself like others in his forlorn situation. To every claim of six, seven, or eight thousand ducats, he replied by the assertion, that he had ten thousand crowns in his chancery, and showed some reluctance to be convinced, till repeatedly urged upon him, that the same sum could not be adequate to the discharge of thirty times the amount.

“Then,” said the King, somewhat impatiently, “why not pay off those who are most pressing, and let the others wait till receipts come round?”

“It is a practice which has been too often resorted to,” replied the Queen, “and it is but a part of honesty to pay creditors, who have advanced their all in your Grace’s service.”

“But are we not,” said René, “King of both the Sicilies, Naples, Arragon, and Jerusalem? And why is the monarch of such fair kingdoms



to be pushed to the wall, like a bankrupt yeoman, for a few bags of paltry crowns?"

"You are indeed monarch of these kingdoms," said Margaret; "but is it necessary to remind your Majesty that it is but as I am Queen of England, in which I have not an acre of land, and cannot command a penny of revenue? You have no dominions which are a source of revenue, save those which you see in this scroll, with an exact list of the income they afford. It is totally inadequate, you see, to maintain your state, and to pay the large engagements incurred to former creditors."

"It is cruel to press me to the wall thus," said the poor King. "What can I do? If I am poor, I cannot help it. I am sure I would pay the debts you talk of, if I knew the way."

"Royal father, I will show it you. — Resign your useless and unavailing dignity, which, with the pretensions attending it, serves but to make your miseries ridiculous. Resign your rights as a sovereign, and the income which cannot be stretched out to the empty excesses of a beggarly court, will enable you to enjoy, in ease and opulence, all the pleasures you most delight in, as a private baron."

"Margaret, you speak folly," answered René, somewhat sternly. "A king and his people are bound by ties which neither can sever without



guilt. My subjects are my flock, I am their shepherd. They are assigned to my governance by Heaven, and I dare not renounce the charge of protecting them."

"Were you in condition to do so," answered the Queen, "Margaret would bid you fight to the death. But don your harness, long disused — mount your war-steed — cry, René for Provence! and see if an hundred men will gather round your standard. Your fortresses are in the hands of strangers; army you have none; your vassals may have good will, but they lack all military skill and soldierlike discipline. You stand but the mere skeleton of monarchy, which France or Burgundy may prostrate on the earth, whichever first puts forth his arm to throw it down."

The tears trickled fast down the old King's cheeks, when this unflattering prospect was set before him, and he could not forbear owning his total want of power to defend himself, and his dominions, and admitting that he had often thought of the necessity of compounding for his resignation with one of his powerful neighbours.

"It was thy interest, Margaret, harsh and severe as you are, which prevented my entering, before now, into measures most painful to my feelings, but perhaps best calculated for my advantage. But I had hoped it would hold on



for my day; and thou, my child, with the talents Heaven has given thee, wouldst, I thought, have found remedy for distresses which I cannot escape, otherwise than by shunning the thoughts of them."

"If it is in earnest you speak of my interest," said Margaret, "know, that your resigning Provence will satisfy the nearest, and almost the only wish that my bosom can form; but, so judge me Heaven, as it is on your account, gracious sire, as well as mine, that I advise your compliance."

"Say no more on't, child; give me the parchment of resignation, and I will sign it: I see thou hast it ready drawn; let us sign it, and then we will overtake the hawkers. We must suffer woe, but there is little need to sit down and weep for it."

"Do you not ask," said Margaret, surprised at his apathy, "to whom you cede your dominions?"

"What boots it," answered the King, "since they must be no more my own? It must be either to Charles of Burgundy, or my nephew Louis — both powerful and politic princes. God send my poor people may have no cause to wish their old man back again, whose only pleasure was to see them happy and mirthful."



“It is to Burgundy you resign Provence,” said Margaret.

“I would have preferred him,” answered René; “he is fierce, but not malignant. One word more, — are my subjects’ privileges and immunities fully secured?”

“Amplly,” replied the Queen; “and your own wants of all kinds honourably provided for. I would not leave the stipulations in your favour in blank, though I might perhaps have trusted Charles of Burgundy, where money alone is concerned.”

“I ask not for myself — with my viol and my pencil, René the Troubadour will be as happy as ever was René the King.”

So saying, with practical philosophy he whistled the burden of his last composed ariette, and signed away the rest of his royal possessions without pulling off his glove, or even reading the instrument.

“What is this?” he said, looking at another and separate parchment of much briefer contents. “Must my kinsman Charles have both the Sicilies, Catalonia, Naples, and Jerusalem, as well as the poor remainder of Provence? Methinks, in decency, some greater extent of parchment should have been allowed to so ample a cession.”

“That deed,” says Margaret, “only disowns and relinquishes all countenance of Ferrand de



Vaudemont's rash attempt on Lorraine, and renounces all quarrel on that account against Charles of Burgundy."

For once Margaret miscalculated the tractability of her father's temper. René positively started, coloured, and stammered with passion, as he interrupted her — "*Only* disown — *only* relinquish — *only* renounce the cause of my grandchild, the son of my dear Yolande — his rightful claims on his mother's inheritance! — Margaret, I am ashamed for thee. Thy pride is an excuse for thy evil temper; but what is pride worth which can stoop to commit an act of dishonourable meanness? To desert, nay disown my own flesh and blood, because the youth is a bold knight under shield, and disposed to battle for his right — I were worthy that harp and horn rung out shame on me, should I listen to thee."

Margaret was overcome in some measure by the old man's unexpected opposition. She endeavoured, however, to show that there was no occasion, in point of honour, why René should engage in the cause of a wild adventurer, whose right, be it good be it bad, was only upheld by some petty and underhand supplies of money from France, and the countenance of a few of the restless banditti who inhabit the borders of all nations. But ere René could answer, voices



raised to an unusual pitch, were heard in the antechamber, the door of which was flung open by an armed knight, covered with dust, who exhibited all the marks of a long journey.

“Here I am,” he said, “father of my mother — behold your grandson — Ferrand de Vaudemont; the son of your lost Yolande kneels at your feet, and implores a blessing on him and his enterprise.”

“Thou hast it,” replied René, “and may it prosper with thee, gallant youth, image of thy sainted mother — my blessings, my prayers, my hopes, go with you.”

“And you, fair aunt of England,” said the young knight, addressing Margaret, “you who are yourself dispossessed by traitors, will you not own the cause of a kinsman who is struggling for his inheritance?”

“I wish all good to your person, fair nephew,” answered the Queen of England, “although your features are strange to me. But to advise this old man to adopt your cause, when it is desperate in the eyes of all wise men, were impious madness.”

“Is my cause then so desperate?” said Ferrand; “forgive me if I was not aware of it. And does my aunt Margaret say this, whose strength of mind supported Lancaster so long, after the spirits of her warriors had been quelled by de-



feat? What — forgive me, for my cause must be pleaded — what would you have said had my mother Yolande been capable to advise her father to disown your own Edward, had God permitted him to reach Provence in safety?"

"Edward," said Margaret, weeping as she spoke, "was incapable of desiring his friends to espouse a quarrel that was irremediable. His, too, was a cause for which mighty princes and peers laid lance in rest."

"Yet Heaven blessed it not —" said Vaudemont.

"Thine," continued Margaret, "is but embraced by the robber nobles of Germany, the upstart burghers of the Rhine cities, the paltry and clownish Confederates of the Cantons."

"But Heaven *has blessed it*," replied Vaudemont. "Know, proud woman, that I come to interrupt your treacherous intrigues, no petty adventurer, subsisting and maintaining warfare by sleight rather than force, but a conqueror from a bloody field of battle, in which Heaven has tamed the pride of the tyrant of Burgundy."

"It is false!" said the Queen, starting; "I believe it not."

"It is true," said De Vaudemont, "as true as heaven is above us. — It is four days since I left the field of Granson, heaped with Burgundy's mercenaries — his wealth, his jewels, his



plate, his magnificent decorations, the prize of the poor Swiss, who scarce can tell their value. Know you this, Queen Margaret?" continued the young soldier, [showing the well-known jewel which decorated the Duke's order of the Golden Fleece; "think you not the lion was closely hunted when he left such trophies as these behind him?"

Margaret looked with dazzled eyes and bewildered thoughts, upon a token which confirmed the Duke's defeat, and the extinction of her last hopes. Her father, on the contrary, was struck with the heroism of the young warrior, a quality which, except as it existed in his daughter Margaret, had, he feared, taken leave of his family. Admiring in his heart the youth who exposed himself to danger for the meed of praise, almost as much as he did the poets by whom the warrior's fame is rendered immortal, he hugged his grandson to his bosom, bidding him "gird on his sword in strength," and assuring him, if money could advance his affairs, he, King René, could command ten thousand crowns, any part, or the whole of which, was at Ferrand's command; thus giving proof of what had been said of him, that his head was incapable of containing two ideas at the same time.

We return to Arthur, who, with the Queen



of England's secretary, Mordaunt, had been not a little surprised by the entrance of the Count de Vaudemont, calling himself Duke of Lorraine, into the anteroom, in which they kept a kind of guard, followed by a tall strong Swiss, with a huge halbert over his shoulder. The prince naming himself, Arthur did not think it becoming to oppose his entrance to the presence of his grandfather and aunt, especially as it was obvious that his opposition must have created an affray. In the huge staring halbardier, who had sense enough to remain in the anteroom, Arthur was not a little surprised to recognise Sigismund Biedermann, who, after staring wildly at him for a moment, like a dog which suddenly recognises a favourite, rushed up to the young Englishman with a wild cry of gladness, and in hurried accents, told him how happy he was to meet with him, and that he had matters of importance to tell him. It was at no time easy for Sigismund to arrange his ideas, and now they were altogether confused, by the triumphant joy which he expressed for the recent victory of his countrymen over the Duke of Burgundy; and it was with wonder that Arthur heard his confused and rude, but faithful tale.

“Look you, King Arthur, the Duke had come up with his huge army as far as Granson, which



is near the outlet of the great lake of Neufchatel. There were five or six hundred confederates in the place, and they held it till provisions failed, and then you know they were forced to give it over. But though hunger is hard to bear, they had better have borne it a day or two longer, for the butcher Charles hung them all up by the neck, upon trees round the place, — and there was no swallowing for them, you know, after such usage as that. Meanwhile all was busy on our hills, and every man that had a sword or lance accoutered himself with it. We met a Neufchatel, and some Germans joined us with the noble Duke of Lorraine. Ah, King Arthur, there is a leader! — we all think him second but to Rudolf of Donnerhugel — you saw him even now — it was he that went into that room — and you saw him before, — it is he that was the Blue Knight of Basle; but we called him Laurenz then, for Rudolf said, his presence among us must not be known to our father, and I did not know myself at that time who he really was. Well, when we came to Neufchatel we were a goodly company; we were fifteen thousand stout confederates, and of others, Germans and Lorraine men, I will warrant you five thousand more. We heard that the Burgundian was sixty thousand in the field; but we heard, at the same time, that Charles



had hung up our brethren like dogs, and the man was not among us — among the confederates, I mean — who would stay to count heads, when the question was to avenge them. I would you could have heard the roar of fifteen thousand Swiss demanding to be led against the butcher of their brethren! My father himself, who, you know, is usually so eager for peace, now gave the first voice for battle; so, in the grey of the morning, we descended the lake towards Granson, with tears in our eyes and weapons in our hands, determined to have death or vengeance. We came to a sort of strait, between Vauxmoreux and the lake; there were horse on the level ground between the mountain and the lake, and a large body of infantry on the side of the hill. The Duke of Lorraine and his followers engaged the horse, while we climbed the hill to dispossess the infantry. It was with us the affair of a moment. Every man of us was at home among the crags, and Charles's men were stuck among them as thou wert, Arthur, when thou didst first come to Geierstein. But there were no kind maidens to lend them their hands to help them down. No, no — There were pikes, clubs, and halberts, many a one, to dash and thrust them from places where they could hardly keep their feet had there been no one to disturb them. So the horsemen pushed



by the Lorrainers, and seeing us upon their flank, fled as fast as their horses could carry them. Then we drew together again on a fair field, which is *buon campagna*, as the Italians say, where the hills retire from the lake. But lo you, we had scarce arrayed our ranks, when we heard such a din and clash of instruments, such a trample of their great horses, such a shouting and crying of men, as if all the soldiers, and all the minstrels in France and Germany, were striving which should make the loudest noise. Then there was a huge cloud of dust approaching us, and we began to see we must do or die, for this was Charles and his whole army come to support his vanguard. A blast from the mountain dispersed the dust, for they had halted to prepare for battle. O, good Arthur! you would have given ten years of life but to have seen the sight! There were thousands of horse all in complete array, glancing against the sun, and hundred of knights with crowns of gold and silver on their helmets, and thick masses of spears on foot, and cannon, as they call them. I did not know what things they were, which they drew on heavily with bullocks and placed before their army, but I knew more of them before the morning was over. Well, we were ordered to draw up in a hollow square, as we are taught at exercise, and before we pushed



forwards, we were commanded, as is the godly rule and guise of our warfare, to kneel down and pray to God, Our Lady, and the blessed saints; and we afterwards learned that Charles, in his arrogance, thought we asked for mercy — Ha! ha! ha! a proper jest. If my father once knelt to him, it was for the sake of Christian blood and godly peace; but on the field of battle, Arnold Biederman would not have knelt to him and his whole chivalry, though he had stood alone with his sons on that field. Well, but Charles, supposing we asked grace, was determined to show us that we had asked it at a graceless face, for he cried, 'Fire my cannon on the coward slaves; it is all the mercy they have to expect from me!' — Bang — bang — bang — off went the things I told you off, like thunder and lightning, and some mischief they did, but the less that we were kneeling; and the saints doubtless gave the huge balls a hoist over the heads of those who were asking grace from them, but from no mortal creatures. So we had the signal to rise and rush on, and I promise you there were no sluggards. Every man felt ten men's strength. My halbert is no child's toy — if you have forgotten it, there it is — and yet it trembled in my grasp as if it had been a willow wand to drive cows with. On we went, when suddenly the cannon were



silent, and the earth shook with another and continued growl and battering, like thunder under ground. It was the men-at-arms rushing to charge us. But our leaders knew their trade, and had seen such a sight before — it was, Halt, halt — kneel down in the front — stoop in the second rank — close shoulder to shoulder like brethren, lean all spears forward and receive them like an iron wall. On they rushed, and there was a rending of lances that would have served the Unterwalden old women with splinters of firewood for a twelvemonth. Down went armed horse — down went accoutred knight — down went banner and bannerman — down went peaked boot and crowned helmet, and of those who fell not a man escaped with life. So they drew off in confusion, and were getting in order to charge again, when the noble Duke Ferrand and his horsemen dashed at them in their own way, and we moved onward to support him. Thus on we pressed, and the foot hardly waited for us, seeing their cavalry so handled. Then if you had seen the dust and heard the blows! the noise of a hundred thousand thrashers, the flight of the chaff which they drive about, would be but a type of it. On my word, I almost thought it shame to dash about my halbert, the rout was so helplessly piteous. Hundreds



were slain unresisting, and the whole army was in complete flight."

"My father — my father!" exclaimed Arthur; "in such a rout, what can have become of him?"

"He escaped safely," said the Swiss; "fled with Charles."

"It must have been a bloody field ere he fled," replied the Englishman.

"Nay," answered Sigismund, "he took no part in the fight, but merely remained by Charles; and prisoners said it was well for us, for that he is a man of great counsel and action in the wars. And as to flying, a man in such a matter must go back if he cannot press forward, and there is no shame in it, especially if you be not engaged in your own person."

As he spoke thus, their conversation was interrupted by Mordaunt, with "Hush, hush — the King and Queen come forth."

"What am I to do?" said Sigismund, in some alarm. "I care not for the Duke of Lorraine; but what am I to do when Kings and Queens enter?"

"Do nothing but rise, unbonnet yourself, and be silent."

Sigismund did as he was directed.

King René came forth arm in arm with his grandson; and Margaret followed, with deep disappointment and vexation on her brow. She



signed to Arthur as she passed, and said to him — “Make thyself master of the truth of this most unexpected news, and bring the particulars to me. Mordaunt will introduce thee.”

She then cast a look on the young Swiss, and replied courteously to his awkward salutation. The royal party then left the room, René bent on carrying his grandson to the sporting-party, which had been interrupted, and Margaret to seek the solitude of her private apartment, and await the confirmation of what she regarded as evil tidings.

They were no sooner passed, than Sigismund observed, — “And so that is a King and Queen! — Peste! the King looks somewhat like old Jacomo, the violer, that used to scrape on the fiddle to us when he came to Geierstein in his rounds. But the Queen is a stately creature. The chief cow of the herd, who carries the bouquets and garlands, and leads the rest to the chalet, has not a statelier pace. And how deftly you approached her and spoke to her, I could not have done it with so much grace — But it is like that you have served apprentice to the court trade?”

“Leave that for the present, good Sigismund.” answered Arthur, “and tell me more of this battle?”

“By Saint Mary, but I must have some vic-



tuals and drink first," said Sigismund, "if your credit in this fine place reaches so far."

"Doubt it not, Sigismund," said Arthur; and, by the intervention of Mordaunt, he easily procured, in a more retired apartment, a collation and wine, to which the young Biederman did great honour, smacking his lips with much gusto after the delicious wines, to which, in spite of his father's ascetic precepts, his palate was beginning to be considerably formed and habituated. When he found himself alone with a flask of *côte roti* and a biscuit, and his friend Arthur, he was easily led to continue his tale of conquest.

"Well — where was I — Oh, where we broke their infantry — well — they never rallied, and fell into greater confusion at every step — and we might have slaughtered one half of them, had we not stopt to examine Charles's camp. Mercy on us, Arthur, what a sight was there! Every pavilion was full of rich clothes, splendid armour, and great dishes and flagons, which some men said were of silver; but I knew there was not so much silver in the world, and was sure they must be of pewter, rarely burnished. Here there were hosts of laced lackeys, and grooms, and pages, and as many attendants as there were soldiers in the army; and thousands, for what I knew, of pretty maidens. By the same token,



both menials and maidens placed themselves at the disposal of the victors; but I promise you that my father was right severe on any who would abuse the rights of war. But some of our young men did not mind him, till he taught them obedience with the staff of his halbert. Well, Arthur, there was fine plundering, for the Germans and French that were with us, rifled every thing, and some of our men followed the example — it is very catching — So I got into Charles's own pavilion, where Rudolf and some of his people were trying to keep out every one, that he might have the spoiling of it himself, I think; but neither he, nor any Bernese of them all, dared lay truncheon over my pate; so I entered, and saw them putting piles of pewter-trenchers, so clean as to look like silver, into chests and trunks. I pressed through them into the inner place, and there was Charles's pallet-bed — I will do him justice, it was the only hard one in his camp — and there were fine sparkling stones and pebbles lying about among gauntlets, boots, vambraces, and such-like gear — So I thought of your father and you, and looked for something, when what should I see but my old friend here, (here he drew Queen Margaret's necklace from his bosom,) which I knew, because you remember I recovered it from the Scharfrichter at La Fe-



rette. — ‘Oho! you pretty sparkless,’ said I, ‘you shall be Burgundian no longer, but go back to my honest English friends,’ and therefore”——

“It is of immense value,” said Arthur, “and belongs not to my father or to me, but to the Queen you saw but now.”

“And she will become it rarely,” answered Sigismund. “Were she but a score, or a score and a half years younger, she were a gallant wife for a Swiss landholder. I would warrant her to keep his household in high order.”

“She will reward thee liberally for recovering her property,” said Arthur, scarce suppressing a smile at the idea of the proud Margaret becoming the housewife of a Swiss shepherd.

“How — reward!” said the Swiss. “Bethink thee I am Sigismund Biederman, the son of the Landamman of Unterwalden — I am not a base *lanz-knecht*, to be paid for courtesy with pias-tres. Let her grant me a kind word of thanks, or the matter of a kiss, and I am well content.”

“A kiss of her hand, perhaps,” said Arthur, again smiling at his friend’s simplicity.

“Umph, the hand! Well! it may do for a Queen of some fifty years and odd, but would be poor homage to a Queen of May.”

Arthur here brought back the youth to the



subject of his battle, and learned that the slaughter of the Duke's forces in the flight had been in no degree equal to the importance of the action.

“Many rode off on horseback,” said Sigismund; “and our German *reiters* flew on the spoil, when they should have followed the chase. And, besides, to speak truth, Charles's camp delayed our very selves in the pursuit; but had we gone half a mile further, and seen our friends hanging on trees, not a confederate would have stopped from the chase while he had limbs to carry him in pursuit.”

“And what has become of the Duke?”

“Charles has retreated into Burgundy, like a boar who has felt a touch of the spear, and is more enraged than hurt; but is, they say, sad and sulky. Others report that he has collected all his scattered army, and immense forces besides, and has screwed his subjects to give him money, so that we may expect another brush. But all Switzerland will join us after such a victory.”

“And my father is with him?” said Arthur.

“Truly he is, and has in a right godly manner tried to set afoot a treaty of peace with my own father. But it will scarce succeed. Charles is as mad as ever; and our people are right proud of our victory, and so they well may.



Nevertheless, my father for ever preaches that such victories, and such heaps of wealth, will change our ancient manners, and that the ploughman will leave his labour to turn soldier. He says much about it; but why money, choice meat and wine, and fine clothing, should do so much harm, I cannot bring my poor brains to see — And many better heads than mine are as much puzzled. — Here's to you, friend Arthur. — This is choice liquor!"

"And what brings you and your General, Prince Ferrand, post to Nancy?" said the young Englishman.

"Faith, you are yourself the cause of our journey."

"I the cause?" said Arthur. — "Why, how could that be?"

"Why, it is said you and Queen Margaret are urging this old fiddling King René to yield up his territories to Charles, and to disown Ferrand in his claim upon Lorraine. And the Duke of Lorraine sent a man that you know well — that is, you do not know *him*, but you know some of *his* family, and he knows more of you than you wot — to put a spoke in your wheel, and prevent your getting for Charles the county of Provence, or preventing Ferrand being troubled or traversed in his natural rights over Lorraine."



“On my word, Sigismund, I cannot comprehend you,” said Arthur.

“Well,” replied the Swiss, “my lot is a hard one. All our house say that I can comprehend nothing, and I shall be next told that nobody can comprehend me. — Well, in plain language, I mean my uncle, Count Albert, as he calls himself, of Geierstein, — my father’s brother.”

“Anne of Geierstein’s father!” echoed Arthur.

“Ay, truly, I thought we should find some mark to make you know him by.”

“But I never saw him.”

“Ay, but you have though — An able man he is, and knows more of every man’s business than the man does himself. Oh! it was not for nothing that he married the daughter of a Salamander!”

“Pshaw, Sigismund, how can you believe that nonsense?” answered Arthur.

“Rudolf told me you were as much bewildered as I was that night at Graffs-lust,” answered the Swiss.

“If I were so, I was the greater ass for my pains,” answered Arthur.

“Well, but this uncle of mine has got some of the old conjuring books from the library at Arnheim, and they say he can pass from place to place with more than mortal speed; and that he is helped in his designs by mightier counsel-



lors than mere men. Always, however, though so able and highly-endowed, his gifts, whether coming from a lawful or unlawful quarter, bring him no abiding advantage. He is eternally plunged into strife and danger."

"I know few particulars of his life," said Arthur, disguising as much as he could his anxiety to hear more of him; "but I have heard that he left Switzerland to join the Emperor."

"True," answered the young Swiss, "and married the young Baroness of Arnheim, — but afterwards he incurred my namesake's imperial displeasure, and not less that of the Duke of Austria. They say you cannot live in Rome and strive with the Pope; so my uncle thought it best to cross the Rhine, and betake himself to Charles's court, who willingly received noblemen from all countries, so that they had good sounding names, with the title of Count, Marquis, Baron, or suchlike, to march in front of them. So my uncle was most kindly received; but within this year or two all this friendship has been broken up. Uncle Albert obtained a great lead in some mysterious societies, of which Charles disapproved, and set so hard at my poor uncle, that he was fain to take orders and shave his hair, rather than lose his head. But though he cut off his hair, his brain remains as busy as ever; and although the Duke suffered him to be



at large, yet he found him so often in his way, that all men believed he waited but an excuse for seizing upon him and putting him to death. But my uncle persists that he fears not Charles; and that, Duke as he is, Charles has more occasion to be afraid of him. — And so you saw how boldly he played his part at La Ferette ”

“By Saint George of Windsor!” exclaimed Arthur, “the Black Priest of Saint Paul’s?”

“Oh ho! you understand me now. Well, he took it upon him that Charles would not dare to punish him for his share in De Hagenbach’s death; and no more did he, although uncle Albert sat and voted in the Estates of Burgundy, and stirred them up all he could to refuse giving Charles the money he asked of them. But when the Swiss war broke out, uncle Albert became assured his being a clergyman would be no longer his protection, and that the Duke intended to have him accused of corresponding with his brother and countrymen; and so he appeared suddenly in Ferrand’s camp at Neufchatel, and sent a message to Charles that he renounced his allegiance, and bid him defiance.”

“A singular story of an active and versatile man,” said the young Englishman.

“Oh, you may seek the world for a man like uncle Albert. Then he knows every thing; and he told Duke Ferrand what you were about here,



and offered to go and bring more certain information — ay, though he left the Swiss camp but five or six days before the battle, and the distance between Arles and Neufchatel be four hundred miles complete, yet we met him on his return, when Duke Ferrand, with me to show him the way, was hastening hitherward, having set off from the very field of battle.”

“Met him!” said Arthur — “Met whom? — Met the Black Priest of Saint Paul’s?”

“Ay, I mean so,” replied Sigismund; “but he was habited as a Carmelite monk.”

“A Carmelite!” said Arthur, a sudden light flashing on him; “and I was so blind as to recommend his services to the Queen! I remember well that he kept his face much concealed in his cowl — and I, foolish beast, to fall so grossly into the snare! — And yet perhaps it is as well the transaction was interrupted, since I fear, if carried successfully through, all must have been disconcerted by this astounding defeat.”

Their conversation had thus far proceeded, when Mordaunt appearing, summoned Arthur to his royal mistress’s apartment. In that gay palace, a gloomy room, whose windows looked upon some part of the ruins of the Roman edifice, but excluded every other object, save broken walls and tottering columns, was the retreat



which Margaret had chosen for her own. She received Arthur with a kindness, more touching that it was the inmate of so proud and fiery a disposition, — of a heart, assailed with many woes, and feeling them severely.

“Alas, poor Arthur!” she said, “thy life begins where thy father’s threatens to end, in useless labour to save a sinking vessel. The rushing leak pours in its waters faster than human force can lighten or discharge. All — all goes wrong, when our unhappy cause becomes connected with it — Strength becomes weakness, wisdom folly, and valour cowardice. The Duke of Burgundy, hitherto victorious in all his bold undertakings, has but to entertain the momentary thought of yielding succour to Lancaster, and behold his sword is broken by a peasant’s flail; and his disciplined army, held to be the finest in the world, flies like chaff before the wind; while their spoils are divided by renegade German hirelings, and barbarous Alpine shepherds! — What more hast thou learned of this strange tale?”

“Little, madam, but what you have heard. The worst additions are, that the battle was shamefully cowardlike, and completely lost, with every advantage to have won it — the best, that the Burgundian army has been rather dispersed than destroyed, and that the Duke him-



self has escaped, and is rallying his forces in Upper Burgundy."

"To sustain a new defeat, or engage in a protracted and doubtful contest, fatal to his reputation as defeat itself. Where is thy father?"

"With the Duke, madam; as I have been informed," replied Arthur.

"Hie to him, and say I charge him to look after his own safety, and care no farther for my interests. This last blow has sunk me — I am without an ally, without a friend, without treasure —"

"Not so, madam," replied Arthur. "One piece of good fortune has brought back to your Grace this inestimable relic of your fortunes." — And producing the precious necklace, he gave the history of its recovery.

"I rejoice at the chance which has restored these diamonds," said the Queen, "that in point of gratitude, at least, I may not be utterly bankrupt. Carry them to your father — tell him my schemes are over — and my heart, which so long clung to hope, is broken at last. — Tell him the trinkets are his own, and to his own use let him apply them. They will but poorly repay the noble earldom of Oxford, lost in the cause of her who sends them."

"Royal madam," said the youth, "be assured my father would sooner live by service as a



*schwarz-reiter*, than become a burden on your misfortunes."

"He never yet disobeyed command of mine," said Margaret; "and this is the last I will lay upon him. If he is too rich or too proud to benefit by his Queen's behest, he will find enough of poor Lancastrians who have fewer means or fewer scruples."

"There is yet a circumstance I have to communicate," said Arthur, and recounted the history of Albert of Geierstein, and the disguise of a Carmelite monk.

"Are you such a fool," answered the Queen, "as to suppose this man has any supernatural powers to aid him in his ambitious projects and his hasty journeys?"

"No, madam — but it is whispered that the Count Albert of Geierstein, or this Black Priest of Saint Paul's, is a chief amongst the Secret Societies of Germany, which even princes dread whilst they hate them; for the man that can command a hundred daggers, must be feared even by those who rule thousands of swords."

"Can this person," said the Queen, "being now a churchman, retain authority amongst those who deal in life and death? It is contrary to the canons."

"It would seem so, royal madam; but everything in these dark institutions differs from what



is practised in the light of day. Prelates are often heads of a Vehmique bench, and the Archbishop of Cologne exercises the dreadful office of their chief, as Duke of Westphalia, the principal region in which these Societies flourish. \* Such privileges attach to the secret influence of the chiefs of this dark association, as may well seem supernatural to those who are unapprized of circumstances, of which men shun to speak in plain terms."

"Let him be wizard or assassin," said the Queen, "I thank him for having contributed to interrupt my plan of the old man's cession of Provence, which, as events stand, would have

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\* The Archbishop of Cologne was recognised as head of all the Free Tribunals (*i. e.* the Vehmique benches) in Westphalia, by a writ of privilege granted in 1335, by the Emperor Charles IV. Wenceslaus confirmed this act by a privilege dated 1382, in which the Archbishop is termed Grand Master of the Vehme, or Grand Inquisitor. And this prelate and other priests were encouraged to exercise such office, by Pope Boniface III., whose ecclesiastical discipline permitted them in such cases to assume the right of judging in matters of life and death.



stripped René of his dominions, without furthering our plan of invading England. — Once more, be stirring with the dawn, and bend thy way back to thy father, and charge him to care for himself and think no more of me. Bretagne, where the heir of Lancaster resides, will be the safest place of refuge for its bravest followers. Along the Rhine, the Invisible Tribunal, it would seem, haunts both shores, and to be innocent of ill is no security; even here the proposed treaty with Burgundy may take air, and the Provençaux carry daggers as well as crooks and pipes. But I hear the horses fast returning from the hawking party, and the silly old man, forgetting all the eventful proceedings of the day, whistling as he ascends the steps. Well, we will soon part, and my removal will be, I think, a relief to him. Prepare for banquet and ball, for noise and nonsense — above all, to bid adieu to Aix with morning dawn."

Thus dismissed from the Queen's presence, Arthur's first care was to summon Thiebault to have all things in readiness for his departure; his next to prepare himself for the pleasures of the evening, not perhaps so heavily affected by the failure of his negotiation as to be incapable of consolation in such a scene; for the truth was, that his mind secretly revolted at the thoughts of the simple old King being despoiled of his



dominions to further an invasion of England, in which whatever interest he might have in his daughter's rights, there was little chance of success.

If such feelings were censurable they had their punishment. Although few knew how completely the arrival of the Duke of Lorraine, and the intelligence he brought with him, had disconcerted the plans of Queen Margaret, it was well known there had been little love betwixt the Queen and his mother Yolande; and the young Prince found himself at the head of a numerous party in the court of his grandfather, who disliked his aunt's haughty manners, and were wearied by the unceasing melancholy of her looks and conversation, and her undisguised contempt of the frivolities which passed around her. Ferrand, besides, was young, handsome, a victor just arrived from a field of battle, fought gloriously, and gained against all chances to the contrary. That he was a general favourite, and excluded Arthur Philipson, as an adherent of the unpopular Queen, from the notice her influence had on a former evening procured him, was only a natural consequence of their relative condition. But what somewhat hurt Arthur's feelings was, to see his friend Sigismund the Simple, as his brethren called him, shining with the reflected glory of the Duke Ferrand of



Lorraine, who presented to all the ladies present, the gallant young Swiss, as Count Sigismund of Geierstein. His care had procured for his follower a dress rather more suitable for such a scene than the country attire of the Count, otherwise Sigismund Biederman.

For a certain time, whatever of novelty is introduced into society is pleasing, though it has nothing else to recommend it. The Swiss were little known personally out of their own country, but they were much talked of; it was a recommendation to be of that country. Sigismund's manners were blunt; a mixture of awkwardness and rudeness, which was termed frankness during the moment of his favour. He spoke bad French and worse Italian — it gave naiveté to all he said. His limbs were too bulky to be elegant; his dancing, for Count Sigismund failed not to dance, was the bounding and gamboling of a young elephant; yet they were preferred to the handsome proportions and courtly movements of the youthful Englishman, even by the black-eyed Countess, in whose good graces Arthur had made some progress on the preceding evening. Arthur thus thrown into the shade, felt as Mr Pepys afterwards did when he tore his camlet cloak, — the damage was not great, but it troubled him.

Nevertheless, the passing evening brought him



some revenge. There are some works of art, the defects of which are not seen till they are injudiciously placed in too strong a light, and such was the case with Sigismund the Simple. The quick-witted, though fantastic Provençaux, soon found out the heaviness of his intellect, and the extent of his good-nature, and amused themselves at his expense, by ironical compliments and well-veiled raillery. It is probable they would have been less delicate on the subject, had not the Swiss brought into the dancing room along with him his eternal halbert, the size, and weight, and thickness of which boded little good to any one whom the owner might detect in the act of making merry at his expense. But Sigismund did no further mischief that night, except that, in achieving a superb *entrechat*, he alighted with his whole weight on the miniature foot of his pretty partner, which he wellnigh crushed to pieces.

Arthur had hitherto avoided looking towards Queen Margaret during the course of the evening, lest he should disturb her thoughts from the channel in which they were rolling, by seeming to lay a claim on her protection. But there was something so whimsical in the awkward physiognomy of the mal-adroit Swiss, and the pain and mortification of the suffering Provençale, that he could not help glancing an



eye to the alcove where the Queen's chair of state was placed, to see if she noted either. The very first view was such as to rivet his attention. Margaret's head was reclined on the chair, her eyes scarcely open, her features drawn up and pinched, her hands closed with effort. The English lady of honour who stood behind her — old, deaf, and dim-sighted — had not discovered any thing in her mistress's position, more than the abstracted and indifferent attitude with which the Queen was wont to be present in body and absent in mind, during the festivities of the Provençal court. But when Arthur, greatly alarmed, came behind the seat to press her attention to her mistress, she exclaimed, after a minute's investigation, "Mother of Heaven, the Queen is dead!" And it was so. It seemed that the last fibre of life, in that fiery and ambitious mind, had, as she herself prophesied, given way at the same time with the last thread of political hope.



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## CHAPTER XXXII.

*Toll, toll the bell!*

*Greatness is o'er,*

*The heart has broke,*

*To ache no more;*

*An unsubstantial pageant all —*

*Drop o'er the scene the funeral pall.*

*Old Poem.*

**T**HE commotion and shrieks of fear and amazement which were excited among the ladies of the court by an event so singular and shocking, had begun to abate, and the sighs, more serious though less intrusive, of the few English attendants of the deceased Queen began to be heard, together with the groans of old King



René, whose emotions were as acute as they were shortlived. The leeches had held a busy but unavailing consultation, and the body that was once a Queen's, was delivered to the Priest of St Sauveur, that beautiful church in which the spoils of Pagan temples have contributed to fill up the magnificence of the Christian edifice. The stately pile was duly lighted up, and the funeral provided with such splendour as Aix could supply. The Queen's papers being examined, it was found, that Margaret, by disposing of jewels and living at small expense, had realized the means of making a decent provision for life, for her very few English attendants. Her diamond necklace, described in her last will as in the hands of an English merchant named John Philipson, or his son, or the price thereof, if by them sold or pledged, she left to the said John Philipson and his son Arthur Philipson, with a view to the prosecution of the design which they had been destined to advance, or, if that should prove impossible, to their own use and profit. The charge of her funeral rites was wholly intrusted to Arthur, called Philipson, with a request that they should be conducted entirely after the forms observed in England. This trust was expressed in an addition to her will, signed the very day on which she died.



Arthur lost no time in dispatching Thiebault express to his father, with a letter, explaining in such terms as he knew would be understood, the tenor of all that had happened since he came to Aix, and above all, the death of Queen Margaret. Finally, he requested directions for his motions, since the necessary delay occupied by the obsequies of a person of such eminent rank must detain him at Aix till he should receive them.

The old King sustained the shock of his daughter's death so easily, that, on the second day after the event, he was engaged in arranging a pompous procession for the funeral, and composing an elegy, to be sung to a tune also of his own composing, in honour of the deceased Queen, who was likened to the goddesses of heathen mythology, and to Judith, Deborah, and all the other holy women, not to mention the saints of the Christian dispensation. It cannot be concealed, that when the first burst of grief was over, King René could not help feeling that Margaret's death cut a political knot which he might have otherwise found it difficult to untie, and permitted him to take open part with his grandson, so far indeed as to afford him a considerable share of the contents of the Provençal treasury, which amounted to no lar-



ger sum than ten thousand crowns. Ferrand having received the blessing of his grandfather, in a form which his affairs rendered most important to him, returned to the resolute whom he commanded; and with him, after a most loving farewell to Arthur, went the stout but simple-minded young Swiss, Sigismund Biederman.

The little court of Aix were left to their mourning. King René, for whom ceremonial and show, whether of a joyful or melancholy character, was always matter of importance, would willingly have bestowed on solemnizing the obsequies of his daughter Margaret what remained of his revenue, but was prevented from doing so, partly by remonstrances from his ministers, partly by the obstacles opposed by the young Englishman, who, acting upon the presumed will of the dead, interferred to prevent any such fantastic exhibitions being exhibited at the obsequies of the Queen, as had disgusted her during her life.

The funeral, therefore, after many days had been spent in public prayers, and acts of devotion, was solemnized with the mournful magnificence due to the birth of the deceased, and with which the church, of Rome so well



knows how to affect at once the eye, ear, and feelings.

Amid the various nobles who assisted on the solemn occasion, there was one who arrived just as the tolling of the great bells of St Sauveur had announced that the procession was already on its way to the Cathedral. The stranger hastily exchanged his travelling dress for a suit of deep mourning, which was made after the fashion proper to England. So attired, he repaired to the Cathedral, where the noble mien of the cavalier imposed such respect on the attendants, that he was permitted to approach close to the side of the bier, and it was across the coffin of the Queen for whom he had acted and suffered so much, that the gallant Earl of Oxford exchanged a melancholy glance with his son. The assistants, especially the English servants of Margaret, gazed on them both with respect and wonder, and the elder cavalier, in particular, seemed to them no unapt representative of the faithful subjects of England, paying their last duty at the tomb of her who had so long swayed the sceptre, if not faultlessly, yet always with a bold and resolved hand.

The last sound of the solemn dirge had died away, and almost all the funeral attendants had retired, when the father and son still lingered



in mournful silence beside the remains of their Sovereign. The clergy at length approached, and intimated they were about to conclude the last duties, by removing the body which had been lately occupied and animated by so haughty and restless a spirit, to the dust, darkness, and silence to the vault, where the long-descended Counts of Provence awaited dissolution. Six priests raised the bier on their shoulders, others bore huge waxen torches before and behind the body, as they carried it down a private staircase which yawned in the floor to admit their descent. The last notes of the requiem, in which the churchmen joined, had died away along the high and fretted arches of the Cathedral, the last flash of light which arose from the mouth of the vault had glimmered and disappeared, when the Earl of Oxford, taking his son by the arm, led him in silence forth into a small cloistered court behind the building, where they found themselves alone. They were silent for a few minutes, for both, and particularly the father, were deeply affected. At length the Earl spoke.

“And this, then, is her end,” said he. “Here, royal lady, all that we have planned and pledged life upon falls to pieces with thy dissolution! The heart of resolution, the head of policy,



is gone; and what avails it that the limbs of the enterprise still have motion and life? Alas, Margaret of Anjou! may Heaven reward thy virtues, and absolve thee from the consequence of thine errors! Both belonged to thy station, and if thou didst hoist too high a sail in prosperity, never lived there princess who defied more proudly the storms of adversity, or bore up against them with such dauntless nobility of determination. With this event the drama has closed, and our parts, my son, are ended."

"We bear arms, then, against the infidels, my lord," said Arthur, with a sigh that was, however, hardly audible.

"Not," answered the Earl, "until I learn that Henry of Richmond, the undoubted heir of the house of Lancaster, has no occasion for my services. In these jewels, of which you wrote me, so strangely lost and recovered, I may be able to supply him with resources more needful than either your services or mine. But I return no more to the camp of the Duke of Burgundy; for in him there is no help."

"Can it be possible that the power of so great a sovereign has been overthrown in one fatal battle?" said Arthur.

"By no means," replied his father. "The loss at Granson was very great; but to the strength



of Burgundy it is but a scratch on the shoulders of a giant. It is the spirit of Charles himself, his wisdom at least, and his foresight, which have given way under the mortification of a defeat, by such as he accounted inconsiderable enemies, and expected to have trampled down with a few squadrons of his men-at-arms. Then his temper is become froward, peevish, and arbitrary, devoted to those who flatter, and, as there is too much reason to believe, betray him; and suspicious of those councillors who give him wholesome advice. Even I have had my share of distrust. Thou knowest I refused to bear arms against our late hosts the Swiss; and he saw in that no reason for rejecting my attendance on his march. But since the defeat of Granson, I have observed a strong and sudden change, owing, perhaps, in some degree to the insinuations of Campo-basso, and not a little to the injured pride of the Duke, who was unwilling that an indifferent person in my situation, and thinking as I do, should witness the disgrace of his arms. He spoke in my hearing of lukewarm friends, cold-blooded neutrals, — of those who, not being with him, must be against him. I tell thee, Arthur de Vere, the Duke has said that which touched my honour so nearly, that nothing but the commands of Queen Margaret,



and the interests of the House of Lancaster, could have made me remain in his camp. That is over — My royal mistress has no more occasion for my poor services — the Duke can spare no aid to our cause — and if he could, we can no longer dispose of the only bribe which might have induced him to afford us succours. The power of seconding his views on Provence is buried with Margaret of Anjou.”

“What, then, is your purpose?” demanded his son.

“I propose, said Oxford, “to wait at the court of King René until I can hear from the Earl of Richmond, as we must still call him. I am aware that banished men are rarely welcome at the court of a foreign prince; but I have been the faithful follower of his daughter Margaret. I only propose to reside in disguise, and desire neither notice nor maintenance; so methinks King René will not refuse to permit me to breathe the air of his dominions, until I learn in what direction fortune or duty shall call me.”

“Be assured he will not,” answered Arthur. “René is incapable of a base or ignoble thought; and if he could despise trifles as he detests dishonour, he might be ranked high in the list of monarchs.”



This resolution being adopted, the son presented his father at King René's court, whom he privately made acquainted that he was a man of quality, and a distinguished Lancastrian. The good King would in his heart have preferred a guest of lighter accomplishments, and gayer temper, to Oxford, a statesman and a soldier of melancholy and grave habits. The Earl was conscious of this, and seldom troubled his benevolent and light-hearted host with his presence. He had, however, an opportunity of rendering the old King a favour of peculiar value. This was in conducting an important treaty betwixt René and Louis XI. of France, his nephew. Upon that crafty monarch, René finally settled his principality, for the necessity of extricating his affairs by such a measure was now apparent even to himself, every thought of favouring Charles of Burgundy in the arrangement having died with Queen Margaret. The policy and wisdom of the English Earl, who was intrusted with almost the sole charge of this secret and delicate measure, were of the utmost advantage to good King René, who was freed from personal and pecuniary vexations, and enabled to go piping and tabouring to his grave. Louis did not fail to propitiate the plenipotentiary, by throwing



out distant hopes of aid to the efforts of the Lancastrian party in England. A faint and insecure negotiation was entered into upon the subject; and these affairs, which rendered two journeys to Paris necessary on the part of Oxford and his son, in the spring and summer of the year 1476, occupied them until that year was half spent.

In the meanwhile, the wars of the Duke of Burgundy with the Swiss Cantons and Count Ferrand of Lorraine, continued to rage. Before midsummer, 1476, Charles had assembled a new army of at least sixty thousand men, supported by one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, for the purpose of invading Switzerland, where the warlike mountaineers easily levied a host of thirty thousand Switzers, now accounted almost invincible, and called upon their confederates, the Free Cities on the Rhine, to support them with a powerful body of cavalry. The first efforts of Charles were successful. He overran the Pays de Vaud, and recovered most of the places which he had lost after the defeat at Granson. But instead of attempting to secure a well defended frontier, or, what would have been still more politic, to achieve a peace upon equitable terms with his redoubtable neighbours, this most obstinate of princes resumed the purpose of pene-



trating into the recesses of the Alpine mountains, and chastising the mountaineers even within their own strongholds, though experience might have taught him the danger, nay, desperation of the attempt. Thus the news received by Oxford and his son, when they returned to Aix in midsummer, was, that Duke Charles had advanced to Morat, (or Murten,) situated upon a lake of the same name, at the very entrance of Switzerland. Here report said, that Adrian de Bubenberg, a veteran knight of Berne, commanded, and maintained the most obstinate defence, in expectation of the relief which his countrymen were hastily assembling.

«Alas, my old brother-in-arms!» said the Earl to his son, on hearing these tidings, «this town besieged, these assaults repelled, this vicinity of an enemy's country, this profound lake, these inaccessible cliffs, threaten a second part of the tragedy of Granson, more calamitous perhaps than even the former!»

On the last week of June, the capital of Provence was agitated by one of those unauthorized, yet generally received rumours, which transmit great events with incredible swiftness, as an apple flung from hand to hand by a number of



people will pass a given space infinitely faster than if borne by the most rapid series of expresses. The report announced a second defeat of the Burgundians, in terms so exaggerated, as induced the Earl of Oxford to consider the greater part, if not the whole, as a fabrication.



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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

*And is the hostile troop arrived,*

*And have they won the day?*

*It must have been a bloody field*

*Ere Darwent fled away.*

*The Ettrick Shepherd.*

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SLEEP did not close the eyes of the Earl of Oxford or his son; for although the success or defeat of the Duke of Burgundy could not now be of importance to their own private or political affairs, yet the father did not cease to interest himself in the fate of his former companion in arms; and the son, with the fire of youth, always eager after novelty, \* expected to

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\* Cupidus novarum rerum.



find something to advance or thwart his own progress in every remarkable event which agitated the world.

Arthur had risen from his bed, and was in the act of attiring himself, when the tread of a horse arrested his attention. He had no sooner looked out of the window, than exclaiming, "News, my father, news from the army!" he rushed into the street, where a cavalier, who appeared to have ridden very hard, was enquiring for the two Philipsons, father and son. He had no difficulty in recognising Colvin, the master of the Burgundian ordnance. His ghastly look bespoke distress of mind; his disordered array and broken armour, which seemed rusted with rain, or stained with blood, gave the intelligence of some affray in which he had probably been worsted; and so exhausted was his gallant steed, that it was with difficulty the animal could stand upright. The condition of the rider was not much better. When he alighted from his horse to greet Arthur, he reeled so much that he would have fallen without instant support. His horny eye had lost the power of speculation; his limbs possessed imperfectly that of motion, and it was with a half suffocated voice that he muttered, "Only fatigue — want of rest and of food."



Arthur assisted him into the house, and refreshments were procured; but he refused all except a bowl of wine, after tasting which he set it down, and looking at the Earl of Oxford with an eye of the deepest affliction, he ejaculated, "The Duke of Burgundy!"

"Slain?" replied the Earl; "I trust not!"

"It might have been better if he were," said the Englishman; "but dishonour has come before death."

"Defeated, then?" said Oxford.

"So completely and fearfully defeated," answered the soldier, "that all that I have seen of loss before was slight in comparison."

"But how, or where?" said the Earl of Oxford; "you were superior in numbers, as we were informed."

"Two to one at least," answered Colvin; "and when I speak of our encounter at this moment, I could rend my flesh with my teeth for being here to tell such a tale of shame. We had sat down for about a week before that paltry town of Murten, or Morat, or whatever it is called. The governor, one of those stubborn mountain bears of Berne, bade us defiance. He would not even condescend to shut his gates,



but when we summoned the town, returned for answer, we might enter if we pleased, — we should be suitably received. I would have tried to bring him to reason by a salvo or two of artillery, but the Duke was too much irritated to listen to good counsel. Stimulated by that black traitor, Campo-basso, he deemed it better to run forward with his whole force upon a place, which, though I could soon have battered it about their German ears, was yet too strong to be carried by swords, lances, and hagbuts. We were beaten off with great loss, and much discouragement to the soldiers. We then commenced more regularly, and my batteries would have brought these mad Switzers to their senses. Walls and ramparts went down before the lusty cannoneers of Burgundy; we were well secured also by entrenchments against those whom we heard of as approaching to raise the siege. But on the evening of the twentieth of this month, we learned that they were close at hand, and Charles, consulting only his own bold spirit, advanced to meet them, relinquishing the advantage of our batteries and strong position. By his orders, though against my own judgment, I accompanied him with twenty good pieces, and the flower of my people. We broke up on the next morning, and had not advanced far



before we saw the lances and thick array of halberts and two-handed swords which crested the mountain. Heaven, too, added its terrors — a thunder-storm, with all the fury of those tempestuous climates, descended on both armies, but did most annoyance to ours, as our troops, especially the Italians, were more sensible to the torrents of rain which poured down, and the rivulets which, swelled into torrents, inundated and disordered our position. The Duke for once saw it necessary to alter his purpose of instant battle. He rode up to me, and directed me to defend with the cannon the retreat which he was about to commence, adding, that he himself would in person sustain me with the men-at-arms. The order was given to retreat. But the movement gave new spirit to an enemy already sufficiently audacious. The ranks of the Swiss instantly prostrated themselves in prayer — a practice on the field of battle which I have ridiculed — but I will do so no more. When, after five minutes, they sprung again on their feet, and began to advance rapidly, sounding their horns and crying their war cries with all their usual ferocity — behold, my lord, the clouds of heaven opened, shedding on the confederates the blessed light of the returning sun, while our ranks were still in the gloom of the



tempest. My men were discouraged. The host behind them was retreating; the sudden light thrown on the advancing Switzers showed along the mountains a profusion of banners, a glancing of arms, giving to the enemy the appearance of double the numbers that had hitherto been visible to us. I exhorted my followers to stand fast, but in doing so I thought a thought, and spoke a word, which was a grievous sin. 'Stand fast, my brave cannoneers,' I said, 'we will presently let them hear louder thunders, and show them more fatal lightnings, than their prayers have put down!' — My men shouted — But it was an impious thought — a blasphemous speech — and evil came after it. We levelled our guns on the advancing masses as fairly as cannon were ever pointed — I can vouch it, for I laid the Grand Duchess of Burgundy myself — Ah, poor Duchess! what rude hands manage thee now! — The volley was fired, and ere the smoke spread from the muzzles, I could see many a man, and many a banner, go down. It was natural to think such a discharge should have checked the attack, and whilst the smoke hid the enemy from us, I made every effort again to load our cannon, and anxiously endeavoured to look through the mist to discover the state of our opponents. But ere our smoke was cleared



away, or the cannon again loaded, they came headlong down on us, horse and foot, old men and boys, men-at-arms and varlets, charging up to the muzzle of the guns, and over them, with total disregard to their lives. My brave fellows were cut down, pierced through, and overrun, while they were again loading their pieces, nor do I believe that a single cannon was fired a second time."

"And the Duke?" said the Earl of Oxford, "did he not support you?"

"Most loyally and bravely," answered Colvin, "with his own body guard of Walloons and Burgundians. But a thousand Italian mercenaries went off, and never showed face again. The pass, too, was cumbered with the artillery, and in itself narrow, bordering on mountains and cliffs, a deep lake close beside. In short, it was a place totally unfit for horsemen to act in. In spite of the Duke's utmost exertions, and those of the gallant Flemings who fought around him, all were borne back in complete disorder. I was on foot, fighting as I could, without hopes of my life, or indeed thoughts of saving it, when I saw the guns taken and my faithful cannoneers slain. But I saw Duke Charles hard pressed, and took my horse from



my page that held him — Thou, too, art lost, my poor orphan boy! — I could only aid Monseigneur de la Croye and others to extricate the Duke. Our retreat became a total rout, and when we reached our rear-guard, which we had left strongly encamped, the banners of the Switzers were waving on our batteries, for a large division had made a circuit through mountain passes known only to themselves, and attacked our camp, vigorously seconded by that accursed Adrian de Bubenbergh, who sallied from the beleaguered town, so that our entrenchments were stormed on both sides at once. — I have more to say, but having ridden day and night to bring you these evil tidings, my tongue clings to the roof of my mouth, and I feel that I can speak no more. The rest is all flight and massacre, disgraceful to every soldier that shared in it. For my part, I confess my contumelious self-confidence and insolence to man, as well as blasphemy to Heaven. If I live, it is but to hide my disgraced head in a cowl, and expiate the numerous sins of a licentious life."

With difficulty the broken-minded soldier was prevailed upon to take some nourishment and repose, together with an opiate, which was prescribed by the physician of King René, who



recommended it as necessary to preserve even the reason of his patient, exhausted by the events of the battle, and subsequent fatigue.

The Earl of Oxford, dismissing other assistance, watched alternately with his son at Colvin's bedside. Notwithstanding the draught that had been administered, his repose was far from sound. Sudden starts, the perspiration which started from his brow, the distortions of his countenance, and the manner in which he clenched his fists and flung about his limbs, showed that in his dreams he was again encountering the terrors of a desperate and forlorn combat. This lasted for several hours; but about noon fatigue and medicine prevailed over nervous excitation, and the defeated commander fell into a deep and untroubled repose till evening. About sunset he awakened, and, after learning with whom and where he was, he partook of refreshments, and without any apparent consciousness of having told them before, detailed once more all the particulars of the battle of Murten.

«It were little wide of truth," he said, «to calculate, that one half of the Duke's army fell by the sword, or were driven into the lake. Those who escaped are great part of them scat-



tered, never again to unite. Such a desperate and irretrievable rout was never witnessed. We fled like deer, sheep, or any other timid animals, which only remain in company because they are afraid to separate, but never think of order or of defence."

"And the Duke?" said the Earl of Oxford.

"We hurried him with us," said the soldier, "rather from instinct than loyalty, as men flying from a conflagration snatch up what they have of value, without knowing what they are doing. Knight and knave, officer and soldier, fled in the same panic, and each blast of the horn of Uri in our rear added new wings to our flight."

"And the Duke?" repeated Oxford.

"At first he resisted our efforts, and strove to turn back on the foe; but when the flight became general, he galloped along with us, without a word spoken or a command issued. At first we thought his silence and passiveness, so unusual in a temper so fiery, were fortunate for securing his personal safety. But when we rode the whole day, without being able to obtain a word of reply to all our questions, — when he sternly refused refreshments of every kind,



though he had tasted no food all that disastrous day, — when every variation of his moody and uncertain temper was sunk into silent and sullen despair, we took counsel what was to be done, and it was by the general voice that I was dispatched to entreat that you, for whose counsels alone Charles has been known to have had some occasional deference, would come instantly to his place of retreat, and exert all your influence to awaken him from this lethargy, which may otherwise terminate his existence.”

“And what remedy can I interpose?” said Oxford. “You know how he neglected my advice, when following it might have served my interest as well as his own. You are aware that my life was not safe among the miscreants that surrounded the Duke, and exercised influence over him.”

“Most true,” answered Colvin; “but I also know he is your ancient companion-in-arms, and it would ill become me to teach the noble Earl of Oxford what the laws of chivalry require. For your lordship’s safety, every honest man in the army will give willing security.”

“It is for that I care least,” said Oxford, indifferently; “and if indeed my presence can be



of service to the Duke, — if I could believe that he desired it" —

"He does — he does, my lord!" said the faithful soldier, with tears in his eyes. "We heard him name your name, as if the words escaped him in a painful dream."

"I will go to him, such being the case," said Oxford. — "I will go instantly. Where did he purpose to establish his head-quarters?"

"He had fixed nothing for himself on that or other matters; but Monsieur de Contay named La Rivière, near Salins, in Upper Burgundy, as the place of his retreat."

"Thither, then, will we, my son, with all haste of preparation. Thou, Colvin, hadst better remain here, and see some holy man, to be assoilzied for thy hasty speech on the battlefield of Morat. There was offence in it without doubt, but it will be ill atoned for by quitting a generous master when he hath most need of your good service; and it is but an act of cowardice to retreat into the cloister, till we have no longer active duties to perform in this world."

"It is true," said Colvin, "that should I leave the Duke now, perhaps not a man would



stay behind that could stell a cannon properly. The sight of your lordship cannot but operate favourably on my noble master, since it has waked the old soldier in myself. If your lordship can delay your journey till to-morrow, I will have my spiritual affairs settled, and my bodily health sufficiently restored, to be your guide to La Rivière; and, for the cloister, I will think of it when I have regained the good name which I have lost at Murten. But I will have masses said, and these right powerful, for the souls of my poor cannoneers."

The proposal of Colvin was adopted, and Oxford, with his son, attended by Thiebault, spent the day in preparation, excepting the time necessary to take formal leave of King René, who seemed to part with them with regret. In company with the ordnance officer of the discomfitted Duke, they traversed those parts of Provence, Dauphiné, and Franche Comté, which lie between Aix and the place to which the Duke of Burgundy had retreated; but the distance and inconvenience of so long a route consumed more than a fortnight on the road, and the month of July 1476 was past, when the travellers arrived in Upper Burgundy, and at the Castle of La Rivière, about twenty miles to the south of



the town of Salins. The castle, which was but of small size, was surrounded by very many tents, which were pitched in a crowded, disordered, and unsoldierlike manner, very unlike the discipline usually observed in the camp of Charles the Bold. That the Duke was present there, however, was attested by his broad banner, which, rich with all its quarterings, streamed from the battlements of the castle. The guard turned out to receive the strangers, but in a manner so disorderly, that the Earl looked to Colvin for explanation. The master of the ordnance shrugged up his shoulders, and was silent.

Colvin having sent in notice of his arrival, and that of the English Earl, Monsieur de Contay caused them presently to be admitted, and expressed much joy at their arrival.

"A few of us," he said, "true servants of the Duke, are holding council here, at which your assistance, my noble Lord of Oxford, will be of the utmost importance. Messieurs De la Croye, De Craon, Rubempré, and others, nobles of Burgundy, are now assembled to superintend the defence of the country at this exigence."



They all expressed delight to see the Earl of Oxford, and had only abstained from thrusting their attentions on him the last time he was in the Duke's camp, as they understood it was his wish to observe incognito.

“His Grace,” said De Craon, “has asked after you twice, and on both times by your assumed name of Philipson.”

“I wonder not at that, my Lord of Craon,” replied the English nobleman; “the origin of the name took its rise in former days, when I was here during my first exile. It was then said, that we poor Lancastrian nobles must assume other names than our own, and the good Duke Philip said, as I was brother-in-arms to his son Charles, I must be called after himself, by the name of Philipson. In memory of the good sovereign, I took that name when the day of need actually arrived, and I see that the Duke thinks of our early intimacy by his distinguishing me so. — How fares his Grace?”

The Burgundians looked at each other, and there was a pause.

“Even like a man stunned, brave Oxford,” at length De Contay replied. “Sieur d’Argentin,



you can best inform the noble Earl of the condition of our sovereign."

"He is like a man distracted," said the future historian of that busy period. "After the battle of Granson, he was never, to my thinking, of the same sound judgment as before. But then, he was capricious, unreasonable, peremptory, and inconsistent, and resented every counsel that was offered, as if it had been meant in insult; was jealous of the least trespass in point of ceremonial, as if his subjects were holding him in contempt. Now there is a total change, as if this second blow had stunned him, and suppressed the violent passions which the first called into action. He is silent as a Carthusian, solitary as a hermit, expresses interest in nothing, least of all in the guidance of his army. He was, you know, anxious about his dress; so much so, that there was some affectation even in the rudenesses which he practised in that matter. But, woe's me, you will see a change now; he will not suffer his hair or nails to be trimmed or arranged. He is totally heedless of respect or disrespect towards him, takes little or no nourishment, and uses strong wines, which, however, do not seem to affect his understanding; he will hear nothing of war or state affairs,



as little of hunting or of sport. Suppose an anchorite brought from a cell to govern a kingdom, you see in him, except in point of devotion, a picture of the fiery active Charles of Burgundy."

"You speak of a mind deeply wounded, Sieur d'Argentin," replied the Englishman. "Think you it fit I should present myself before the Duke?"

"I will enquire," said Contay; and leaving the apartment, returned presently, and made a sign to the Earl to follow him.

In a cabinet, or closet, the unfortunate Charles reclined in a large arm-chair, his legs carelessly stretched on a footstool, but so changed that the Earl of Oxford could have believed what he saw to be the ghost of the once fiery Duke. Indeed, the shaggy length of hair which, streaming from his head, mingled with his beard; the hollowness of the caverns, at the bottom of which rolled his wild eyes; the falling in of the breast, and the advance of the shoulders, gave the ghastly appearance of one who has suffered the final agony which takes from mortality the signs of life and energy. His very costume (a cloak flung loosely over him) increased his resemblance to a shrouded phantom. De Contay named the



Earl of Oxford; but the Duke gazed on him with a lustreless eye, and gave him no answer.

“Speak to him, brave Oxford,” said the Burgundian in a whisper; “he is even worse than usual, but perhaps he may know your voice.”

Never, when the Duke of Burgundy was in the most palmy state of his fortunes, did the noble Englishman kneel to kiss his hand with such sincere reverence. He respected in him, not only the afflicted friend, but the humbled sovereign, upon whose tower of trust the lightning had so recently broken. It was probably the falling of a tear upon his hand which seemed to awake the Duke’s attention, for he looked towards the Earl, and said, “Oxford — Philipson — my old — my only friend, hast thou found me out in this retreat of shame and misery?”

“I am not your only friend, my lord,” said Oxford. “Heaven has given you many affectionate friends among your natural and loyal subjects. But though a stranger, and saving the allegiance I owe to my lawful sovereign, I will yield to none of them in the respect and deference which I have paid to your Grace in prosperity, and now come to render to you in adversity.”



“Adversity indeed,” said the Duke; “irremediable intolerable adversity! I was lately Charles of Burgundy, called the Bold — now am I twice beaten by a scum of German peasants; my standard taken, my men-at-arms put to flight, my camp twice plundered, and each time of value more than equal to the price of all Switzerland fairly lost; myself hunted like a caitiff goat or chamois — The utmost spite of hell could never accumulate more shame on the head of a sovereign!”

“On the contrary, my lord,” said Oxford, “it is a trial of Heaven, which calls for patience and strength of mind. The bravest and best knight may lose the saddle; he is but a laggard who lies rolling on the sand of the lists after the accident has chanced.”

“Ha, laggard, sayst thou?” said the Duke, some part of his ancient spirit awakened by the broad taunt, “Leave my presence, sir, and return to it no more, till you are summoned thither —”

“Which I trust will be no later than your Grace quits your dishabille, and disposes yourself to see your vassals and friends with such ceremony as befits you and them,” said the Earl composedly.



“How mean you by that, Sir Earl? You are unmannerly.”

“If I be, my lord, I am taught my ill breeding by circumstances. I can mourn over fallen dignity; but I cannot honour him who dishonours himself, by bending, like a regardless boy, beneath the scourge of evil fortune.”

“And who am I that you should term me such?” said Charles, starting up in all his natural pride and ferocity; “or who are you but a miserable exile, that you should break in upon my privacy with such disrespectful upbraiding?”

“For me,” replied Oxford, “I am, as you say, an unrespected exile; nor am I ashamed of my condition, since unshaken loyalty to my King and his successors has brought me to it. But in you, can I recognise the Duke of Burgundy in a sullen hermit, whose guards are a disorderly soldiery, dreadful only to their friends; whose councils are in confusion for want of their sovereign, and who himself lurks, like a lamed wolf in its den, in an obscure castle, waiting but a blast of the Switzer’s horn to fling open its gates, which there are none to defend; who wears not a knightly sword to protect his person, and cannot even die like a



stag at bay, but must be worried like a hunted fox?"

"Death and hell, slanderous traitor!" thundered the Duke, glancing a look at his side, and perceiving himself without a weapon, — "It is well for thee I have no sword, or thou shouldst never boast of thine insolence going unpunished. — Contay, step forth like a good knight, and confute the calumniator. Say, are not my soldiers arrayed, disciplined, and in order?"

"My lord," said Contay, trembling (brave as he was in battle) at the frantic rage which Charles exhibited, "there are a numerous soldiery yet under your command, but they are in evil order, and worse disciplined, I think, than they were wont."

"I see it — I see it," said the Duke; "idle and evil counsellors are ye all. — Hearken, Sir of Contay, what have you and the rest of you been doing, holding as you do large lands and high fiefs of us, that I cannot stretch my limbs on a sick-bed, when my heart is half broken, but my troops must fall into such scandalous disorder as exposes me to the scorn and reproach of each beggarly foreigner?"



“My lord,” replied Contay, more firmly, “we have done what we could. But your Grace has accustomed your mercenary generals, and leaders of Free Companies, to take their orders only from your own mouth, or hand. They clamour also for pay, and the treasurer refuses to issue it without your Grace’s order, as he alleges it might cost him his head; and they will not be guided and restrained either by us, or those who compose your council.”

The Duke laughed sternly, but was evidently somewhat pleased with the reply.

“Ha, ha!” he said, “it is only Burgundy who can ride his own wild horses, and rule his own wild soldiery. Hark thee, Contay — Tomorrow I ride forth to review the troops — for what disorder has passed, allowance shall be made. Pay also shall be issued — but woe to those who shall have offended too deeply! Let my grooms of the chamber know to provide me fitting dress and arms. I have got a lesson, (glancing a dark look at Oxford), and I will not again be insulted without the means of wreaking my vengeance. Begone, both of you. And, Contay, send the treasurer hither with his accounts, and woe to his soul if I find aught to



complain of! Begone, I say, and send him hither."

They left the apartment with suitable obeisance. As they retired, the Duke said, abruptly, "Lord of Oxford, a word with you. Where did you study medicine? In your own famed university, I suppose. Thy physic hath wrought a wonder. Yet, Doctor Philipson, it might have cost thee thy life."

"I have ever thought my life cheap," said Oxford, "when the object was to help my friend."

"Thou art indeed a friend," said Charles, "and a fearless one. But go — I have been sore troubled, and thou hast tasked my temper closely. To-morrow we will speak further; meantime, I forgive thee, and I honour thee."

The Earl of Oxford retired to the Council-hall, where the Burgundian nobility, aware of what had passed, crowded around him with thanks, compliments, and congratulations. A general bustle now ensued; orders were hurried off in every direction. Those officers who had duties to perform which had been neglected, hastened to conceal or to atone for their negligence. There was a general tumult in the camp, but



it was a tumult of joy; for soldiers are always most pleased when they are best in order for performing their military service, and license or inactivity, however acceptable at times, are not, when continued, so agreeable to their nature as strict discipline and a prospect of employment.

The treasurer, who was, luckily for him, a man of sense and method, having been two hours in private with the Duke, returned with looks of wonder, and professed, that never, in Charles's most prosperous days, had he showed himself more acute in the department of finance, of which he had but that morning seemed totally incapable; and the merit was universally attributed to the visit of Lord Oxford, whose timely reprimand had, like the shot of a cannon dispersing foul mists, awakened the Duke from his black and bilious melancholy.

On the following day, Charles reviewed his troops with his usual attention, directed new levies, made various dispositions of his forces, and corrected the faults of their discipline by severe orders, which were enforced by some deserved punishments, (of which the Italian mercenaries of Campo-basso had a large share,) and rendered palatable by the payment of ar-



rears, which was calculated to attach them to the standard under which they served.

The Duke also, after consulting with his council, agreed to convoke meetings of the States in his different territories, redress certain popular grievances, and grant some boons which he had hitherto denied; and thus began to open a new account of popularity with his subjects, in place of that which his rashness had exhausted.



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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

— *Heres's a weapon now,  
Shall shake a conquering general in his tent,  
A monarch on his throne, or reach a prelate,  
However holy be his offices,  
E'en while he serves the altar.*

*Old Play.*

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FROM this time all was activity in the Duke of Burgundy's court and army. Money was collected, soldiers were levied, and certain news of the Confederates' motions only were wanting to bring on the campaign. But although Charles was, to all outward appearance, as active as ever, yet those who were more immediately



about his person were of opinion that he did not display the soundness of mind, or the energy of judgment, which had been admired in him before these calamities. He was still liable to fits of moody melancholy, similar to those which descended upon Saul, and was vehemently furious when aroused out of them. Indeed, the Earl of Oxford himself seemed to have lost the power which he had exercised over him at first. Nay, though in general Charles was both grateful and affectionate towards him, he evidently felt humbled by the recollection of his having witnessed his impotent and disastrous condition, and was so much afraid of Lord Oxford being supposed to lead his counsels, that he often repelled his advise, merely, as it seemed, to show his own independence of mind.

In these froward humours, the Duke was much encouraged by Campo-basso. That wily traitor now saw his master's affairs tottering to their fall, and he resolved to lend his lever to the work, so as to entitle him to a share of the spoil. He regarded Oxford as one of the most able friends and counsellors who adhered to the Duke; he thought he saw in his looks that he fathomed his own treacherous purpose,



and therefore he hated and feared him. Besides, in order perhaps to colour over, even to his own eyes, the abominable perfidy he meditated, he affected to be exceedingly enraged against the Duke for the late punishment of marauders belonging to his Italian bands. He believed that chastisement to have been inflicted by the advice of Oxford; and he suspected that the measure was pressed with the hope of discovering that the Italians had not pillaged for their own emolument only, but for that of their commander. Believing that Oxford was thus hostile to him, Campo-basso would have speedily found means to take him out of his path, had not the Earl himself found it prudent to observe some precautions; and the lords of Flanders and Burgundy, who loved him for the very reasons for which the Italian abhorred him, watched over his safety with a vigilance, of which he himself was ignorant, but which certainly was the means of preserving his life.

It was not to be supposed that Ferrand of Lorraine should have left his victory so long unimproved; but the Swiss confederates, who were the strength of his forces, insisted that the first operations should take place in Savoy and the Pays de Vaud, where the Burgundians



had many garrisons, which, though they received no relief, yet were not easily or speedily reduced. Besides the Switzers being, like most of the national soldiers of the time, a kind of militia, most of them returned home, to get in their harvest, and to deposit their spoil in safety. Ferrand, therefore, though bent on pursuing his success with all the ardour of youthful chivalry, was prevented from making any movement in advance until the month of December 1476. In the meantime, the Duke of Burgundy's forces, to be least burdensome to the country, were cantoned in distant places of his dominions, where every exertion was made to perfect the discipline of the new levies. The Duke, if left to himself, would have precipitated the struggle by again assembling his forces, and pushing forward into the Helvetian territories. But though he inwardly foamed at the recollection of Granson and Murten, the memory of these disasters was too recent to permit such a plan of the campaign. Meantime, weeks glided past, and the month of December was far advanced, when, one morning, as the Duke was sitting in council, Campo-basso suddenly entered, with a degree of extravagant rapture in his countenance, singularly different from the cold, regulated and subtle smile which



was usually his utmost advance towards laughter. "*Guantes*," \* he said, "*Guantes*, for luck's sake, if it please your Grace."

"And what of good fortune comes nigh us?" said the Duke, — "methought she had forgot the way to our gates."

"She has returned to them, please your Highness, with her cornucopia full of choicest gifts, ready to pour her fruit, her flowers, her treasures, on the head of the sovereign of Europe most worthy to receive them."

"The meaning of all these?" said Duke Charles; "riddles are for children."

"The hairbrained young madman Ferrand, who calls himself of Lorraine, has broken down from the mountains, at the head of a desultory army of scape-graces like himself; and what think you, — ha! ha! ha! they are overrun-

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\* *Guantes*, used by the Spanish as the French say *étrennes*, or the English handsell or luckpenny — phrases used by inferiors to their patrons as the bringers of good news.



ning Lorraine, and have taken Nancy — ha! ha! ha!”

“By my good faith, Sir Count,” said Contay, astonished at the gay humour with which the Italian treated a matter so serious, “I have seldom heard a fool laugh more gaily at a more scurvy jest, than you, a wise man, laugh at the loss of the principal town of the province we are fighting for.”

“I laugh,” said Campo-basso, “among the spears, as my warhorse does — ha! ha! — among the trumpets. I laugh also over the destruction of the enemy, and the dividing of the spoil, as eagles scream their joy over the division of their prey; I laugh” —

“You laugh,” said the Lord of Contay, waxing impatient, “when you have all the mirth to yourself, as you laughed after our losses at Granson and Murten.”

“Peace, sir!” said the Duke. “The Count of Campo-basso has viewed the case as I do. This young knight-errant ventures from the protection of his mountains; and Heaven deal with me as I keep my oath, when I swear that the next fair field on which we meet shall see one of us dead! It is now the last week of the old year, and



before Twelfth - Day we will see whether he or I shall find the bean in the cake. — To arms, my lords; let our camp instantly break up, and our troops move forward towards Lorraine. Send off the Italian and Albanian light cavalry, and the Stradiots, to scour the country in the van — Oxford, thou wilt bear arms in this journey, wilt thou not?"

"Surely," said the Earl. "I am eating your Highness's bread; and when enemies invade, it stands with my honour to fight for your Grace as if I was your born subject. With your Grace's permission, I will dispatch a pursuivant, who shall carry letters to my late kind host, the Landamman of Unterwalden, acquainting him with my purpose."

The Duke having given a ready assent, the pursuivant was dismissed accordingly, and returned in a few hours, so near had the armies approached to each other. He bore a letter from the Landamman, in a tone of courtesy and even kindness, regretting that any cause should have occurred for bearing arms against his late guest, for whom he expressed high personal regard. The same pursuivant also brought greetings from the family of the Biedermans to their friend Arthur, and a separate letter,



addressed to the same person, of which the contents ran thus: —

«Rudolf Donnerhugel is desirous to give the young merchant, Arthur Philipson, the opportunity of finishing the bargain which remained unsettled between them in the castle-court of Geierstein. He is the more desirous of this, as he is aware that the said Arthur has done him wrong; in seducing the affections of a certain maiden of rank, to whom he, Philipson, is not, and cannot be, any thing beyond an ordinary acquaintance. Rudolf Donnerhugel will send Arthur Philipson word, when a fair and equal meeting can take place on neutral ground. In the meantime, he will be as often as possible in the first rank of the skirmishers.»

Young Arthur's heart leapt high as he read the defiance, the piqued tone of which showed the state of the writer's feelings, and argued sufficiently Rudolf's disappointment on the subject of Anne of Geierstein, and his suspicion that she had bestowed her affections on the youthful stranger. Arthur found means of dispatching a reply to the challenge of the Swiss, assuring him of the pleasure with which he would attend his commands, either in front of the line or elsewhere, as Rudolf might desire.



Meantime the armies where closely approaching to each other, and the light troops sometimes met. The Stradiots from the Venetian territory, a sort of cavalry resembling that of the Turks, performed much of that service on the part of the Burgundian army, for which, indeed, if their fidelity could have been relied on, they were admirably well qualified. The Earl of Oxford observed, that these men, who were under the command of Campo-basso, always brought in intelligence that the enemy were in indifferent order, and in full retreat. Besides, information was communicated through their means, that sundry individuals, against whom the Duke of Burgundy entertained peculiar personal dislike, and whom he specially desired to get into his hands, had taken refuge in Nancy. This greatly increased the Duke's ardour for retaking that place, which became perfectly ungovernable when he learned that Ferrand and his Swiss allies had drawn off to a neighbouring position called Saint Nicholas, on the news of his arrival. The greater part of the Burgundian counsellors, together with the Earl of Oxford, protested against his besieging a place of some strength, while an active enemy lay in the neighbourhood to relieve it. They remonstrated on the smallness of his army, on the severity of



the weather, on the difficulty of obtaining provisions, and exhorted the Duke, that having made such a movement as had forced the enemy to retreat, he ought to suspend decisive operations till spring. Charles at first tried to dispute and repel these arguments; but when his counsellors reminded him that he was placing himself and his army in the same situation as at Granson and Murten, he became furious at the recollection, foamed at the mouth, and only answered by oaths and imprecations, that he would be master of Nancy before Twelfth Day.

Accordingly, the army of Burgundy sat down before Nancy, in a strong position, protected by the hollow of a water-course, and covered with thirty pieces of cannon, which Colvin had under his charge.

Having indulged his obstinate temper in thus arranging the campaign, the Duke seemed to give a little more heed to the advice of his counsellors touching the safety of his person, and permitted the Earl of Oxford, with his son, and two or three officers of his household, men of approved trust, to sleep within his pavilion, in addition to the usual guard.

It wanted three days of Christmas when the Duke sat down before Nancy, and on that very



evening a tumult happened which seemed to justify the alarm for his personal safety. It was midnight, and all in the ducal pavilion were at rest, when a cry of treason arose. The Earl of Oxford, drawing his sword, and snatching up a light which burned beside him, rushed into the Duke's apartment, and found him standing on the floor totally undressed, but with his sword in his hand, and striking around him so furiously, that the Earl himself had difficulty in avoiding his blows. The rest of his officers rushed in, their weapons drawn, and their cloaks wrapped around their left arms. When the Duke was somewhat composed, and found himself surrounded by his friends, he informed them, with rage and agitation, that the officers of the Secret Tribunal had in spite of the vigilant precautions taken, found means to gain entrance into his chamber, and charged him, under the highest penalty, to appear before the Holy Vehmé upon Christmas night.

The bystanders heard this story with astonishment, and some of them were uncertain whether they ought to consider it as a reality, or a dream of the Duke's irritable fancy. But the citation was found on the Duke's toilette, written, as was the form, upon parch-



ment, signeted with three crosses, and stuck to the table with a knife. A slip of wood had been also cut from the table, Oxford read the summons with attention. It named as usual a place, where the Duke was cited to come unarmed and unattended, and from which it was said he would be guided to the seat of judgment.

Charles, after looking at the scroll for some time, gave vent to his thoughts.

“I know from what quiver this arrow comes,” he said. “It is shot by that degenerate noble, apostate priest, and accomplice of sorcerers, Albert of Geierstein. We have heard that he is among the motley group of murderers and outlaws, whom the old fiddler of Provence’s grandson has raked together. But, by Saint George of Burgundy! neither monk’s cowl, soldier’s casque, nor conjuror’s cap, shall save him after such an insult as this. I will degrade him from knighthood, hang him from the highest steeple in Nancy, and his daughter shall choose between the meanest herd-boy in my army, and the convent of *filles repentées*!”

“Whatever are your purposes, my lord,” said Contay, “it were surely best be silent,



when, from this late apparition, we may conjecture that more than we wot off may be within hearing."

The Duke seemed struck with this hint, and was silent, or at least only muttered oaths and threats betwixt his teeth, while the strictest search was made for the intruder on his repose. But it was in vain.

Charles continued his researches, incensed at a flight of audacity higher than ever had been ventured upon by these Secret Societies, who, whatever might be the dread inspired by them, had not as yet attempted to cope with sovereigns. A trusty party of Burgundians were sent on Christmas night to watch the spot (a meeting of four cross roads,) named in the summons, and make prisoners of any whom they could lay hands upon; but no suspicious persons appeared at or near the place. The Duke not the less continued to impute the affront he had received to Albert of Geierstein. There was a price set upon his head; and Campo-basso, always willing to please his master's mood undertook that some of his Italians, sufficiently experienced in such feats, should bring the obnoxious baron before him, alive or



dead. Colvin, Contay, and others, laughed in secret at the Italian's promises.

"Subtle as he is," said Colvin, "he will lure the wild vulture from the heaven before he gets Albert of Geierstein into his power."

Arthur, to whom the words of the Duke had given subject for no small anxiety, on account of Anne of Geierstein, and of her father for her sake, breathed more lightly on hearing his menaces held so cheaply.

It was the second day after this alarm that Oxford felt a desire to reconnoitre the camp of Ferrand of Lorraine, having some doubts whether the strength and position of it were accurately reported. He obtained the Duke's consent for this purpose, who at the same time made him and his son a present of two noble steeds of great power and speed, which he himself highly valued.

So soon as the Duke's pleasure was communicated to the Italian Count, he expressed the utmost joy that he was to have the assistance of Oxford's age and experience upon an exploratory party, and selected a chosen party of an hundred Stradiots, whom he said he had sent sometimes to skirmish up to the very beards



of the Switzers. The Earl showed himself much satisfied with the active and intelligent manner in which these men performed their duty, and drove before them and dispersed some parties of Ferrand's cavalry. At the entrance of a little ascending valley, Campo-basso communicated to the English nobleman, that if they could advance to the farther extremity, they would have a full view of the enemy's position. Two or three Stradiots then spurred on to examine this defile, and returning back, communicated with their leader in their own language, who, pronouncing the passage safe, invited the Earl of Oxford to accompany him. They proceeded through the valley without seeing an enemy, but on issuing upon a plain at the point intimated by Campo-basso, Arthur, who was in the van of the Stradiots, and separated from his father, did indeed see the camp of Duke Ferrand within half a mile's distance; but a body of cavalry had that instant issued from it, and were riding hastily towards the gorge of the valley, from which he had just emerged. He was about to wheel his horse and ride off, but, conscious of the great speed of the animal, he thought he might venture to stay for a moment's more accurate survey of the camp. The Stradiots who attended him did not wait his



orders to retire, but went off, as was indeed their duty, when attacked by a superior force.

Meantime, Arthur observed that the Knight, who seemed leader of the advancing squadron, mounted on a powerful horse that shook the earth beneath him, bore on his shield the Bear of Berne, and had otherwise the appearance of the massive frame of Rudolf Donnerhugel. He was satisfied of this when he beheld the cavalier halt his party, and advance towards him alone, putting his lance in rest, and moving slowly, as if to give him time for preparation. To accept such a challenge, in such a moment, was dangerous, but to refuse it was disgraceful and while Arthur's blood boiled at the idea of chastising an insolent rival, he was not a little pleased at heart that their meeting on horseback gave him an advantage over the Swiss, through his perfect acquaintance with the practice of the tourney, in which Rudolf might be supposed more ignorant.

They met, as was the phrase of the time, "manful under shield." The lance of the Swiss glanced from the helmet of the Englishman, against which it was addressed, while the spear of Arthur, directed right against the centre



of his adversary's body, was so justly aimed, and so truly seconded by the full fury of the career, as to pierce, not only the shield which hung round the ill-fated warrior's neck, but a breast-plate, and a shirt of mail which he wore beneath it. Passing clear through the body, the steel point of the weapon was only stopped by the back-piece of the unfortunate cavalier, who fell headlong from his horse, as if struck by lightning, rolled twice or thrice over on the ground, tore the earth with his hands, and then lay prostrate a dead corpse.

There was a cry of rage and grief among those men-at-arms whose ranks Rudolf had that instant left, and many couched their lances to avenge him; but Ferrand of Lorraine, who was present in person, ordered them to make prisoner, but not to harm the successful champion. This was accomplished, for Arthur had not time to turn his bridle for flight, and resistance would have been madness.

When brought before Ferrand, he raised his visor, and said, "Is it well, my lord, to make captive an adventurous Knight, for doing his devoir against a personal challenger?"

"Do not complain, Sir Arthur of Oxford," said Ferrand, "before you experience injury —



You are free, Sir Knight. Your father and you were faithful to my royal aunt Margaret, and although she was my enemy, I do justice to your fidelity in her behalf; and from respect to her memory, disinherited as she was like myself, and to please my grandfather, who I think had some regard for you, I give you your freedom. But I must also care for your safety during your return to the camp of Burgundy. On this side of the hill we are loyal and true-hearted men, on the other they are traitors and murderers. — You, Sir Count, will, I think, gladly see our captive placed in safety."

The Knight to whom Ferrand addressed himself, a tall stately man, put himself in motion to attend on Arthur, while the latter was expressing to the young Duke of Lorraine the sense he entertained of his chivalrous conduct. "Farewell, Sir Arthur de Vere," said Ferrand. "You have slain a noble champion, and to me a most useful and faithful friend. But it was done nobly and openly, with equal arms, and in the front of the line; and evil befall him who entertains feud first!" Arthur bowed to his saddle-bow. Ferrand returned the salutation, and they parted.



Arthur and his new companion had ridden but a little way up the ascent, when the stranger spoke thus. —

“We have been fellow-travellers before, young man, yet you remember me not.”

Arthur turned his eyes on the cavalier, and observing that the crest which adorned his helmet was fashioned like a vulture, strange suspicions began to cross his mind, which were confirmed, when the Knight, opening his helmet, showed him the dark and severe features of the Priest of Saint Paul’s.

“Count Albert of Geierstein!” said Arthur.

“The same,” replied the Count, “though thou hast seen him in other garb and head gear. But tyranny drives all men to arms, and I have resumed, by the license and command of my superiors, those which I had laid aside. A war against cruelty and oppression is holy as that waged in Palestine, in which priests bear armour.”

“My Lord Count,” said Arthur, eagerly, “I cannot too soon entreat you to withdraw to Sir Ferrand of Lorraine’s squadron. Here you are in peril, where no strength or courage can avail you. The Duke has placed a price on your head; and the country betwixt this and



Nancy swarms with Stradiots and Italian light horsemen."

"I laugh at them," answered the Count. "I have not lived so long in a stormy world, amid intrigues of war and policy, to fall by the mean hand of such as they — besides thou art with me, and I have seen but now that thou canst bear thee nobly."

"In your defence, my lord," said Arthur, who thought of his companion as the father of Anne of Geierstein, "I should try to do my best."

"What, youth!" replied Count Albert, with a stern sneer, that was peculiar to his countenance; "wouldst thou aid the enemy of the lord under whose banner thou servest, against his waged soldiers?"

Arthur was somewhat abashed at the turn given to his ready offer of assistance, for which he had expected at least thanks; but he instantly collected himself, and replied, "My Lord Count Albert, you have been pleased to put yourself in peril to protect me from partizans of your party — I am equally bound to defend you from those of our side."

"It is happily answered," said the Count; —



“yet I think there is a little blind partizan, of whom troubadours and minstrels talk, to whose instigation I might, in case of need, owe the great zeal of my protector.”

He did not allow Arthur, who was a good deal embarrassed, time to reply, but proceeded: “Hear me, young man — Thy lance has this day done an evil deed to Switzerland, to Berne, and Duke Ferrand, in slaying their bravest champion. But to me, the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel is a welcome event. Know that he was, as his services grew more indispensable, become importunate in requiring Duke Ferrand’s interest with me for my daughter’s hand. And the Duke himself, the son of a princess, blushed not to ask me to bestow the last of my house — for my brother’s family are degenerate mongrels — upon a presumptuous young man, whose uncle was a domestic in the house of my wife’s father, though they boasted some relationship, I believe, through an illegitimate channel, which yonder Rudolf was wont to make the most of, as it favoured his suit.”

“Surely,” said Arthur, “a match with one so unequal in birth, and far more in every other respect, was too monstrous to be mentioned.”



“While I lived,” replied Count Albert, “never should such union have been formed, if the death both of bride and bridegroom by my dagger could have saved the honour of my house from violation. But when I — I whose days, whose very hours are numbered — shall be no more, what could prevent an undaunted suitor, fortified by Duke Ferrand’s favour, by the general applause of his country, and perhaps by the unfortunate prepossession of my brother Arnold, from carrying his point against the resistance and scruples of a solitary maiden?”

“Rudolf is dead,” replied Arthur, “and may Heaven assoilzie him from guilt! But were he alive, and urging his suit on Anne of Geierstein, he would find there was a combat to be fought — —”

“Which has been already decided,” answered Count Albert. “Now, mark me, Arthur de Vere! My daughter has told me of the passages betwixt you and her. Your sentiments and conduct are worthy of the noble house you descend from, which I well know ranks with the most illustrious in Europe. You are indeed disinherited, but so is Anne of Geierstein, save such pittance as her uncle may impart to her of her paternal inheritance. If you



share it together till better days, (always supposing your noble father gives his consent, for my child shall enter no house against the will of its head,) my daughter knows that she has my willing consent, and my blessing. My brother shall also know my pleasure. He will approve my purpose; for though dead to thoughts of honour and chivalry, he is alive to social feelings, loves his niece, and has friendship for thee and for thy father. What say'st thou, young man, to taking a beggarly Countess, to aid thee in the journey of life? I believe — nay, I prophesy, (for I stand so much on the edge of the grave, that methinks I command a view beyond it,) that a lustre will one day, after I have long ended my doubtful and stormy life, beam on the coronets of De Vere and Geierstein."

De Vere threw himself from his horse, clasped the hand of Count Albert, and was about to exhaust himself in thanks; but the Count insisted on his silence.

"We are about to part," he said. "The time is short — the place is dangerous. You are to me, personally speaking, less than nothing. Had any one of the many schemes of ambition which I have pursued led me to success, the son of a banished Earl had not been the son-in-law I



had chosen. Rise and remount your horse — thanks are unpleasing when they are not merited.”

Arthur arose, and, mounting his horse, threw his raptures into a more acceptable form, endeavouring to describe how his love for Anne, and efforts for her happiness, should express his gratitude to her father; and, observing that the Count listened with some pleasure to the picture he drew of their future life, he could not help exclaiming, — “And you, my lord — you who have been the author of all this happiness, will you not be the witness and partaker of it? Believe me, we will strive to soften the effect of the hard blows which fortune has dealt to you, and should a ray of better luck shine upon us, it will be the more welcome that you can share it.”

“Forbear such folly,” said the Count Albert of Geierstein. “I know my last scene is approaching. — Hear and tremble. The Duke of Burgundy is sentenced to die, and the Secret and Invisible Judges, who doom in secret, and avenge in secret, like the Deity, have given the cord and the dagger to my hand.”

“Oh, cast from you these vile symbols!” exclaimed Arthur, with enthusiasm; “let them



find butchers and common stabbers to do such an office, and not dishonour the noble Lord of Geierstein."

"Peace, foolish boy," answered the Count. "The oath by which I am sworn is higher than that clouded sky, more deeply fixed than those distant mountains. Nor think [my act is that of an assassin, though for such I might plead the Duke's own example. I send not hirelings, like these base Stradiots, to hunt his life, without imperilling mine own. I give not his daughter — innocent of his offences — the choice betwixt a disgraceful marriage and a discreditable retreat from the world. No, Arthur de Vere, I seek Charles with the resolved mind of one, who, to take the life of an adversary, exposes himself to certain death."

"I pray you speak no farther of it," said Arthur, very anxiously. "Consider I serve for the present the Prince whom you threaten — —"

"And art bound," interrupted the Count, "to unfold to him what I tell you. I desire you should do so; and though he hath already neglected a summons of the Tribunal, I am glad to have this opportunity of sending him personal defiance. Say to Charles of Burgundy, that he has wronged Albert of Geierstein. He who is



injured in his honour loses all value for his life, and whoever does so has full command over that of another man. Bid him keep himself well from me, since, if he see a second sun of the approaching year rise over the distant Alps, Albert of Geierstein is forsworn. — And now begone, for I see a party approach under a Burgundian banner. They will ensure your safety, but, should I remain longer, would endanger mine.”

So saying, the Count of Geierstein turned his horse and rode off.



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## CHAPTER XXXV.

*Faint the din of battle bray'd  
Distant down the heavy wind;  
War and Terror fled before,  
Wounds and Death were left behind.*

*Mickle.*

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ARTHUR, left alone, and desirous perhaps to cover the retreat of Count Albert, rode towards the approaching body of Burgundian cavalry, who were arrayed under the Lord Contay's banner.

“Welcome, welcome,” said that nobleman, advancing hastily to the young knight. “The



Duke of Burgundy is a mile hence, with a body of horse to support the reconnoitring party. It is not half an hour since your father galloped up, and stated that you had been led into an ambuscade by the treachery of the Stradiots, and made prisoner. He has impeached Campo-basso of treason, and challenged him to the combat. They have both been sent to the camp, under charge of the Grand Marshal, to prevent their fighting on the spot, though I think our Italian showed little desire to come to blows. The Duke holds their gages, and they are to fight upon Twelfth Day."

"I doubt that day will never dawn for some who look for it," said Arthur; "but if it do, I will myself claim the combat, by my father's permission."

He then turned with Contay, and met a still larger body of cavalry under the Duke's broad banner. He was instantly brought before Charles. The Duke heard, with some apparent anxiety, Arthur's support of his father's accusations against the Italian, in whose favour he was so deeply prejudiced. When assured that the Stradiots had been across the hill, and communicated with their leader just before he en-



couraged Arthur to advance, as it proved, into the midst of an ambush, the Duke shook his head, lowered his shaggy brows, and muttered to himself, — “Ill will to Oxford, perhaps — these Italians are vindictive.” — Then raising his head, he commanded Arthur to proceed.

He heard with a species of ecstasy the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel, and, taking a ponderous gold chain from his own neck, flung it over Arthur’s.

“Why, thou hast forestalled all our honours, young Arthur — this was the biggest bear of them all — the rest are but sucking whelps to him! I think I have found a youthful David to match their huge thick-headed Goliah. But the idiot, to think his peasant hand could manage a lance! Well, my brave boy — what more? How camest thou off? By some wily device or agile stratagem, I warrant.”

“Pardon me, my lord,” answered Arthur, “I was protected by their chief, Ferrand, who considered my encounter with Rudolf Donnerhugel as a personal duel; and desirous to use fair war, as he said, dismissed me honourably, with my horse and arms.”



“Umph!” said Charles, his bad humour returning; “your Prince Adventurer must play the generous — Umph — well, it belongs to his part, but shall not be a line for me to square my conduct by. Proceed with your story, Sir Arthur de Vere.”

As Arthur proceeded to tell how and under what circumstances Count Albert of Geierstein named himself to him, the Duke fixed on him an eager look, and trembled with impatience as he fiercely interrupted him with the question — “And you — you struck him with your poniard under the fifth rib, did you not?”

“I did not, my Lord Duke — we were pledged in mutual assurance to each other.”

“Yet you knew him to be my mortal enemy?” said the Duke. “Go, young man, thy lukewarm indifference has cancelled thy merit. The escape of Albert of Geierstein hath counterbalanced the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel.”

“Be it so, my lord,” said Arthur, boldly. “I neither claim your praises, nor deprecate your censure. I had to move me in either case motives personal to myself — Donnerhugel was my enemy, and to Count Albert I owe some kindness.”



The Burgundian nobles who stood around, were terrified for the effect of this bold speech. But it was never possible to guess with accuracy how such things would affect Charles. He looked around him with a laugh — "Hear you this English cockerel, my lords — what a note will he one day sound, that already crows so bravely in a prince's presence?"

A few horsemen now came in from different quarters, recounting that the Duke Ferrand and his company had retired into their encampment, and the country was clear of the enemy.

"Let us then draw back also," said Charles, "since there is no chance of breaking spears to day. And thou, Arthur de Vere, attend me closely."

Arrived in the Duke's pavilion, Arthur underwent an examination, in which he said nothing of Anne of Geierstein, or her father's designs concerning him, with which he considered Charles as having nothing to do; but he frankly conveyed to him the personal threats which the count had openly used. The Duke listened with more temper, and when he heard the expression, "That a man who is desperate of his own life might command that of any



other person," he said, "But there is a life beyond this, in which he who is treacherously murdered, and his base and desperate assassin, shall each meet their deserts." He then took from his bosom a gold cross, and kissed it, with much appearance of devotion. "In this," said he, "I will place my trust. If I fail in this world, may I find grace in the next. — Ho, Sir Marshal!" he exclaimed — "Let your prisoners attend us."

The Marshal of Burgundy entered with the Earl of Oxford, and stated that his other prisoner, Campo-basso, had desired so earnestly that he might be suffered to go and post his sentinels on that part of the camp entrusted to the protection of his troops, that he, the Marshal, had thought fit to comply with his request.

"It is well," said Burgundy, without further remark — "Then to you, my Lord Oxford, I would present your son, had you not already locked him in your arms. He has won great *los* and honour, and done me brave service. This is a period of the year when good men forgive their enemies; — I know not why, — my mind was little apt to be charged with such matters, — but I feel an unconquerable desire to stop the approaching combat betwixt you and



Campo-basso. For my sake, consent to be friends, and to receive back your gage of battle, and let me conclude this year — perhaps the last I may see — with a deed of peace.”

“My lord,” said Oxford, “it is a small thing you ask of me, since your request only enforces a Christian duty. I was enraged at the loss of my son. I am grateful to Heaven and your Grace for restoring him. To be friends with Campo-basso is to me impossible. Faith and treason, truth and falsehood, might as soon shake hands and embrace. But the Italian shall be to me no more than he has been before this rupture; and this is literally nothing. I put my honour in your Grace’s hands; — if he receives back his gage, I am willing to receive mine. John de Vere needs not be apprehensive that the world will suppose that he fears Campo-basso.”

The Duke returned sincere thanks, and detained the officers to spend the evening in his tent. His manners seemed to Arthur to be more placid than he had ever seen them before, while to the Earl of Oxford they recalled the earlier days in which their intimacy commenced, ere absolute power and unbounded success had



spoiled Charles's rough, but not ungenerous disposition. The Duke ordered a distribution of provisions and wine to the soldiers, and expressed an anxiety about their lodgings, the cure of the wounded, and the health of the army, to which he received only unpleasing answers. To some of his counsellors, apart, he said, "Were it not for our vow, we would relinquish this purpose till spring, when our poor soldiers might take the field with less of suffering."

Nothing else remarkable appeared in the Duke's manner, save that he enquired repeatedly after Campo-basso, and at length received accounts that he was indisposed, and that his physician had recommended rest; he had therefore retired to repose himself, in order that he might be stirring on his duty at peep of day, the safety of the camp depending much on his vigilance.

The Duke made no observation on the apology, which he considered as indicating some lurking disinclination, on the Italian's part, to meet Oxford. The guests at the ducal pavilion were dismissed an hour before midnight.

When Oxford and his son were in their own tent, the Earl fell into a deep reverie, which



lasted nearly ten minutes. At length, starting suddenly up, he said, "My son, give orders to Thiebault and thy yeomen to have our horses before the tent by break of day, or rather before it; and it would not be amiss if you ask our neighbour Colvin to ride along with us. I will visit the outposts by daybreak."

"It is a sudden resolution, my lord," said Arthur.

"And yet it may be taken too late," said his father. "Had it been moonlight, I would have made the rounds to-night."

"It is dark as a wolf's throat," said Arthur. "But wherefore, my lord, can this night in particular excite your apprehensions?"

"Son Arthur, perhaps you will hold your father credulous. But my nurse, Martha Nixon, was a northern woman, and full of superstitions. In particular, she was wont to say, that any sudden and causeless change of a man's nature, as from licence to sobriety, from temperance to indulgence, from avarice to extravagance, from prodigality to love of money, or the like, indicates an immediate change of his fortunes — that some great alteration of circumstances, either for good or evil, (and for evil



most likely, since we live in an evil world,) is impending over him whose disposition is so much altered. This old woman's fancy has recurred so strongly to my mind, that I am determined to see with mine own eyes, ere to-morrow's dawn, that all our guards and patrols around the camp are on the alert."

Arthur made the necessary communications to Colvin and to Thiebault, and then retired to rest.

It was ere daybreak of the first of January, 1477, a period long memorable for the events which marked it, that the Earl of Oxford, Colvin, and the young Englishman, followed only by Thiebault and two other servants, commenced their rounds of the Duke of Burgundy's encampment. For the greater part of their progress, they found sentinels and guards all on the alert and at their posts. It was a bitter morning. The ground was partly covered with snow, — that snow had been partly melted by a thaw, which had prevailed for two days, and partly congealed into ice by a bitter frost, which had commenced the preceding evening, and still continued. A more dreary scene could scarcely be witnessed.



But what were the surprise and alarm of the Earl of Oxford and his companions, when they came to that part of the camp which had been occupied the day before by Campo-basso and his Italians, who, reckoning men-at-arms and Stradiots, amounted to nigh two thousand men. Not a challenge was given — not a horse neighed — no steeds were seen at picquet — no guard on the camp. They examined several of the tents and huts — they were empty,

“Let us back to alarm the camp,” said the Earl of Oxford; “here is treachery.”

“Nay, my lord,” said Colvin, “let us not carry back imperfect tidings. I have a battery an hundred yards in advance, covering the access to this hollow way; let us see if my German cannoneers are at their post, and I think I can swear that we shall find them so. The battery commands a narrow pass; by which alone the camp can be approached, and if my men are at their duty, I will pawn my life that we make the pass good till you bring up succours from the main body.”

“Forward, then, in God’s name!” said the Earl of Oxford.

They galloped, at every risk, [over broken



ground, slippery with ice in some places, encumbered with snow in others. They came to the cannon, judiciously placed to sweep the pass, which rose towards the artillery on the outward side, and then descended gently from the battery into the lower ground. The waning winter moon, mingling with the dawning light, showed them that the guns were in their places, but no sentinel was visible.

“The villains cannot have deserted!” said the astonished Colvin — “But see, there is light in their cantonment. — Oh, that unhallowed distribution of wine! Their usual sin of drunkenness has beset them. I will soon drive them from their revelry.”

He sprung from his horse, and rushed into the tent from whence the light issued. The cannoneers, or most of them, were still there, but stretched on the ground, their cups and flagons scattered around them; and so drenched were they in wassail, that Colvin could only, by commands and threats, awaken two or three, who, staggering, and obeying him rather from instinct than sense, reeled forward to man the battery. A heavy rushing sound, like that of men marching fast, was now heard coming up the pass.



“It is the roar of a distant avalanche,” said Arthur.

“It is an avalanche of Switzers, not of snow,” said Colvin. — “Oh, these drunken slaves! — The cannon are deeply loaded and well pointed — this volley must check them if they were fiends, and the report will alarm the camp sooner than we can do. — But, oh, these drunken villains!”

“Care not for their aid,” said the Earl; “my son and I will each take a linstock, and be gunners for once.”

They dismounted, and bade Thiebault and the grooms look to the horses, while the Earl of Oxford and his son took each a linstock from one of the helpless gunners, three of whom were just sober enough to stand by their guns.

“Bravo!” cried the bold Master of Ordnance, “never was a battery so noble. Now, my mates — your pardon, my lords, for there is no time for ceremony, — and you, ye drunken knaves, take heed not to fire till I give the word, and, were the ribs of these trampers as flinty as their Alps, they shall know how old Colvin loads his guns.”



They stood breathless, each by his cannon. The dreaded sound approached nearer and more near, till the imperfect light showed a dark and shadowy but dense column of men, armed with long spears, pole-axes, and other weapons, amidst which banners dimly floated. Colvin suffered them to approach to the distance of about forty yards, and then gave the word, Fire! But his own piece alone exploded; a slight flame flashed from the touch-hole of the others, which had been spiked by the Italian deserters, and left in reality disabled, though apparently fit for service. Had they been all in the same condition with that fired by Colvin, they would probably have verified his prophecy; for even that single discharge produced an awful effect, and made a long lane of dead and wounded through the Swiss column, in which the first and leading banner was struck down.

“Stand to it yet,” said Colvin, “and aid me, if possible, to reload the piece.”

For this, however, no time was allowed. A stately form, conspicuous in the front of the staggered column, raised up the fallen banner, and a voice as of a giant exclaimed, “What, countrymen! have you seen Murten and Gran-



son, and are you daunted by a single gun? — Berne — Uri — Schwitz — banners forward! Unterwalden, here is your standard! — Cry your war-cries, wind your horns; Unterwalden, follow your Landamman!”

They rushed on like a raging ocean, with a roar as deafening, and a course as impetuous. Colvin, still labouring to reload his gun, was struck down in the act. Oxford and his son were overthrown by the multitude, the closeness of which prevented any blows being aimed at them. Arthur partly saved himself by getting under the gun he was posted at; his father, less fortunate, was much trampled upon, and must have been crushed to death but for his armour of proof. The human inundation, consisting of at least four thousand men, rushed down into the camp, continuing their dreadful shouts, soon mingled with shrill shrieks, groans, and cries of alarm.

A broad red glare rising behind the assailants, and putting to shame the pallid lights of the winter morning, first recalled Arthur to a sense of his condition. The camp was on fire in his rear, and resounded with all the various shouts of conquest and terror that are heard in a town



which is stormed. Starting to his feet, he looked around him for his father. He lay near him senseless, as were the gunners, whose condition prevented their attempting an escape. Having opened his father's casque, he was rejoiced to see him give symptoms of reanimation.

"The horses, the horses!" said Arthur. "Thiebault, where art thou?"

"At hand, my lord," said that trusty attendant, who had saved himself and his charge by a prudent retreat into a small thicket, which the assailants had avoided that they might not disorder their ranks.

"Where is the gallant Colvin?" said the Earl; "get him a horse, I will not leave him in jeopardy."

"His wars are ended, my lord," said Thiebault; "he will never mount steed more."

A look and a sigh as he saw Colvin, with the ramrod in his hand, before the muzzle of the piece, his head cleft by a Swiss battle-axe, was all the moment permitted.

"Whither must we take our course?" said Arthur to his father.



“To join the Duke,” said the Earl of Oxford. “It is not on a day like this that I will leave him.”

“So please you,” said Thiebault, “I saw the Duke, followed by some half score of his guards, riding at full speed across this hollow water-course, and making for the open country to the northward. I think I can guide you on the track.”

“If that be so,” replied Oxford, “we will mount and follow him. The camp has been assailed on several places at once, and all must be over since he has fled.”

With difficulty they assisted the Earl of Oxford to his horse, and rode as fast as his returning strength permitted, in the direction which the Provençal pointed out. Their other attendants were dispersed or slain.

They looked back more than once on the camp, now one great scene of conflagration, by whose red and glaring light they could discover on the ground the traces of Charles's retreat. About three miles from the scene of their defeat, the sound of which they still heard, mingled with the bells of Nancy, which were ringing in triumph, they reached an half-frozen swamp,



round which lay several dead bodies. The most conspicuous was that of Charles of Burgundy, once the possessor of such unlimited power — such unbounded wealth. He was partly stripped and plundered, as were those who lay round him. His body was pierced with several wounds, inflicted by various weapons. His sword was still in his hand, and the singular ferocity which was wont to animate his features in battle, still dwelt on his stiffened countenance. Close behind him, as if they had fallen in the act of mutual fight, lay the corpse of Count Albert of Geierstein; and that of Ital Schreckenwald, the faithful though unscrupulous follower of the latter, lay not far distant. Both were in the dress of the men-at-arms composing the Duke's guard, a disguise probably assumed to execute the fatal commission of the Secret Tribunal. It is supposed that a party of the traitor Campo-basso's men had been engaged in the skirmish in which the Duke fell, for six or seven of them, and about the same number of the Duke's guards, were found near the spot.

The Earl of Oxford threw himself from his horse, and examined the body of his deceased brother-in-arms, with all the sorrow inspired by early remembrance of his kindness. But as



he gave way to the feelings inspired by so melancholy an example of the fall of human greatness, Thiebault, who was looking out on the path they had just pursued, exclaimed, "To horse, my lord! here is no time to mourn the dead, and little to save the living — the Swiss are upon us."

"Fly thyself, good fellow," said the Earl; "and do thou, Arthur, fly also, and save thy youth for happier days. I cannot and will not fly farther. I will render me to the pursuers; if they take me to grace, it is well; if not, there is ONE above that will receive me to his."

"I will not fly," said Arthur, "and leave you defenceless; I will stay and share your fate."

"And I will remain also," said Thiebault; "the Switzers make fair war when their blood has not been heated by much opposition, and they have had little enough to day."

The party of Swiss which came up proved to be Sigismund, with his brother Ernest, and some of the youths of Unterwalden. Sigismund kindly and joyfully received them to mercy; and thus, for the third time, rendered Arthur an import-



ant service, in return for the kindness he had expressed towards him.

“I will take you to my father,” said Sigismund, “who will be right glad to see you; only that he is ill at ease just now for the death of brother Rudiger, who fell with the banner in his hand, by the only cannon that was fired this morning; the rest could not bark; Campo-basso had muzzled Colvin’s mastiffs, or we should have many more of us have been served like poor Rudiger. But Colvin himself is killed.”

“Campo-basso then was in your correspondence?” said Arthur.

“Not in ours — we scorn such companions — but some dealing there was between the Italian and Duke Ferrand; and having disabled the cannon, and filled the German gunners soundly drunk, he came off to our camp with fifteen hundred horse, and offered to act with us. ‘But no, no!’ said my father, — ‘traitors come not into our Swiss host;’ and so, though we walked in at the door which he left open, we would not have his company. So he marched with Duke Ferrand to attack the other extremity of the camp, where he found them entrance by



announcing them as the return of a reconnoitring party."

"Nay, then," said Arthur, "a more accomplished traitor never drew breath, nor one who drew his net with such success."

"You say well," answered the young Swiss. "The Duke will never, they say, be able to collect another army?"

"Never, young man," said the Earl of Oxford, "for he lies dead before you."

Sigismund started; for he had an inherent respect, and somewhat of fear, for the lofty name of Charles the Bold, and could hardly believe that the mangled corpse, which now lay before him, was once the personage he had been taught to dread. But his surprise was mingled with sorrow, when he saw the body of his uncle, Count Albert of Geierstein.

"Oh, my uncle!" he said — "my dear uncle Albert, has all your greatness and your wisdom brought you to a death, at the side of a ditch, like any crazed beggar? — Come, this sad news must be presently told to my father, who will be concerned to hear of his brother's death,



which will add gall to bitterness, coming on the back of poor Rudiger's. It is some comfort, however, that father and uncle never could abide each other."

With some difficulty, they once more assisted the Earl of Oxford to horseback, and were proceeding to set forward, when the English lord said, — "You will place a guard here, to save these bodies from farther dishonour, that they may be interred with due solemnity."

"By our Lady of Einsiedlen! I thank you for the hint," said Sigismund. "Yes, we should do all that the church can for uncle Albert. It is to be hoped he has not gambled away his soul beforehand, playing with Satan at odds and evens. I would we had a priest to stay by his poor body; but it matters not, since no one ever heard of a demon appearing just before breakfast."

They proceeded to the Landamman's quarters, through sights and scenes which Arthur, and even his father, so well accustomed to war in all its shapes, could not look upon without shuddering. But the simple Sigismund, as he walked by Arthur's side, contrived to hit upon a theme so interesting as to divert his sense of the horrors around them.



“Have you farther business in Burgundy, now this Duke of yours is at an end?”

“My father knows best,” said Arthur; “but I apprehend we have none. The Duchess of Burgundy, who must now succeed to some sort of authority in her late husband’s dominion, is sister to this Edward of York, and a mortal enemy to the House of Lancaster, and to those who have stood by it faithfully. It were neither prudent nor safe to tarry where she has influence.”

“In that case,” said Sigismund, “my plan will fadge bravely. You shall go back to Geierstein, and take up your dwelling with us. Your father will be a brother to mine, and a better one than uncle Albert, whom he seldom saw or spoke with; while with your father he will converse from morning till night, and leave us all the work of the farm. And you, Arthur, you shall go with us, and be a brother to us all, in place of poor Rudiger, who was, to be sure, my real brother, which you cannot be; nevertheless, I did not like him so well, in respect he was not so good-natured. And then Anne — cousin Anne — is left all to my father’s charge, and is now at Geierstein — and you know, King Arthur, we used to call her Queen Guenover.”



“You spoke great folly then,” said Arthur.

“But it is great truth — For, look you, I loved to tell Anne tales of our hunting, and so forth, but she would not listen a word till I threw in something of King Arthur, and then I warrant she would sit still as a heath-hen when the hawk is in the heavens. And now Donnerhugel is slain, you know you may marry my cousin when you and she will, for nobody hath interest to prevent it.”

Arthur blushed with pleasure under his helmet, and almost forgave that new-year’s morning all its complicated distresses.

“You forget,” he replied to Sigismund, with as much indifference as he could assume, “that I may be viewed in your country with prejudice on account of Rudolf’s death.”

“Not a whit, not a whit; we bear no malice for what is done in fair fight under shield. It is no more than if you had beat him in wrestling or at quoits — only it is a game cannot be played over again.”

They now entered the town of Nancy; the windows were hung with tapestry, and the



streets crowded with tumultuous and rejoicing multitudes, whom the success of the battle had relieved from great alarm for the formidable vengeance of Charles of Burgundy.

The prisoners were received with the utmost kindness by the Landamman, who assured them of his protection and friendship. He appeared to support the death of his son Rudiger with stern resignation.

“He had rather,” he said, “his son fell in battle, than that he should live to despise the old simplicity of his country, and think the object of combat was the gaining of spoil. The gold of the dead Burgundy,” he added, “would injure the morals of Switzerland more irretrievably than ever his sword did their bodies.”

He heard of his brother's death without surprise, but apparently with emotion.

“It was the conclusion,” he said, “of a long tissue of ambitious enterprises, which often offered fair prospects, but uniformly ended in disappointment.”

The Landamman farther intimated, that his brother had apprized him that he was engaged



in an affair of so much danger, that he was almost certain to perish in it, and had bequeathed his daughter to her uncle's care, with instructions respecting her.

Here they parted for the present, but shortly after, the Landamman enquired earnestly of the Earl of Oxford, what his motions were like to be, and whether he could assist them.

“I think of choosing Bretagne for my place of refuge,” answered the Earl, “where my wife has dwelt since the battle of Tewkesbury expelled us from England.”

“Do not so,” said the kind Landamman, “but come to Geierstein with the Countess, where, if she can, like you, endure our mountain manners and mountain fare, you are welcome as to the house of a brother, to a soil where neither conspiracy nor treason ever flourished. Bethink you, the Duke of Bretagne is a weak prince, entirely governed by a wicked favourite, Peter Landais. He is as capable — I mean the minister — of selling brave men's blood, as a butcher of selling bullock's flesh; and you know, there are those, both in France and Burgundy, that thirst after yours.”



The Earl of Oxford expressed his thanks for the proposal, and his determination to profit by it, if approved of by Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Richmond, whom he now regarded as his sovereign.

To close the tale, about three months after the battle of Nancy, the banished Earl of Oxford resumed his name of Philipson, bringing with his lady some remnants of their former wealth, which enabled them to procure a commodious residence near to Geierstein; and the Landamman's interest in the state procured for them the right of denizenship. The high blood, and the moderate fortunes, of Anne of Geierstein and Arthur de Vere, joined to their mutual inclination, made their marriage in every respect rational; and Annette, with her bachelor, took up their residence with the young people, not as servants, but mechanical aids in the duties of the farm; for Arthur continued to prefer the chase to the labours of husbandry, which was of little consequence, as his separate income amounted, in that poor country, to opulence. Time glided on, till it amounted to five years since the exiled family had been inhabitants of Switzerland. In the year 1482, the Landamman Biederman died the death of the righteous, la-



mented universally, as a model of the true and valiant, simple-minded and sagacious chiefs, who ruled the ancient Switzers in peace, and headed them in battle. In the same year, the Earl of Oxford lost his noble Countess.

But the star of Lancaster, at that period, began again to culminate, and called the banished lord and his son from their retirement, to mix once more in politics. The treasured necklace of Margaret was then put to its destined use, and the produce applied to levy those bands which shortly after fought the celebrated battle of Bosworth, in which the arms of Oxford and his son contributed so much to the success of Henry VII. This changed the destinies of De Vere and his lady. Their Swiss farm was conferred on Annette and her husband; and the manners and beauty of Anne of Geierstein attracted as much admiration at the English Court as formerly in the Swiss Chalet.

**THE END.**























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The Works of Walter Scott, Esq

Bd.: 146

Zwickau 1829

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